

Department of Systematic Theology  
University of Helsinki  
Helsinki

# **In your Light we see the Light**

*Martin Luther's Understanding of Faith and Reality  
between 1513 and 1521*

Ilmari Karimies

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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## Abstract

The aim of the dissertation is to investigate and clarify Martin Luther's understanding of faith and of reality in his biblical lectures between the years 1513 and 1521. The method of the study is systematic analysis. With regard to its content the work can be seen as an investigation of the history of ideas or dogma.

The general context of the study is the examination of the cognition of God in terms of "knowledge of acquaintance," as in the tradition of divine illumination. The specific background is the understanding of faith as union with Christ in the Finnish School of Luther research. The study first examines Luther's understanding of reality and then Luther's understanding of faith, as the two are connected.

With regard to Luther's understanding of reality, the nature of God, the universe and the human being are examined. Central to the understanding of God is the eternal birth of Christ seen through the concept of the highest good, the idea of God as light, and the divine as uniting contraries. With regard to the universe, the creation as a sign of God, the distinction between the visible and the invisible world, and their coming together in Christ and the Church are examined. With regard to the human being, the distinction between the tripartite and the bipartite anthropologies is analyzed. In them the spirit is the highest part of the human being, capable of grasping God. In the carnal person the spirit is dead and empty. It is made alive by faith. However, the natural capacities cannot grasp the content of faith. Therefore, there is a cognitive and affectual conflict between the flesh and the spirit in the Christian person.

With regard to the understanding of faith, Luther's relation to divine illumination is examined. Luther's reading of Ps. 4:7 represents a realist, Augustinian view of illumination. For Luther, the divine light by which the soul knows the true good is precisely the light of faith. Luther defines faith as actual and immediate cognition of God. In relation to God, with regard to the intellect, it is an incomprehensible, captivating light. With regard to the affect, it is a light which grasps God as the highest good, creating joy and delight. In relation to the universe, faith is a light of understanding (intellect) in which all things are seen as related to God. It is also a light for the affect that directs through tribulations, towards good thoughts and actions. Faith is distinct from the heavenly vision because it is only partial possession, it is commixed with the human nature of Christ, and it is made enigmatic by sin. Luther understands the cognition of God through the concept of infused faith. Acquired faith (dogmas or trust) is secondary, but plays a role in tribulations, in which God is not yet perceived as the immediate content of faith.

Luther's understanding of faith thus follows in its general form the theory of divine illumination. Luther attributes this illumination to the light of faith, which becomes the true theological intellect. Luther's early theology as a whole can be seen as a continuation of the theology of the medieval Augustinian School. The centrality of faith, seen in interpretation of the divine light precisely as faith, guards the *sola gratia* principle fundamental to Luther.

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The study you have at hand is the product of years of engagement with Luther and Augustinian tradition. Besides the Catechism, I first encountered Luther and Augustine as a student at *Parola High School* around year 1996, when by the suggestion of the local youth pastor *Jari Wihersaari* I read Luther's *De Servo Arbitrio* and Augustine's Confessions. This encounter sparked my interest in systematic theology. The epistemological theory of Augustine, the doctrine of illumination, has fascinated me ever since.

When I entered professor *Antti Raunio*'s seminar in 2003, my aim was to investigate the relationship of ontology and epistemology in Luther's understanding of faith. After writing my master's thesis, in which I only scraped the surface of the subject, I worked for a year as a pastor and then in the Diocesan Chapter at Helsinki under bishop, professor emeritus *Eero Huovinen*, who is also a Luther scholar. I thank Eero for his encouragement to take up this task when the opportunity arose. Little did I know that this project would draw me back again to Augustine's doctrine of illumination. I was also unable to predict how many years of my life this research would ultimately take. Especially Luther's anthropology proved to be significantly more complicated than I had expected. The length of the process makes me even more indebted to those parties who believed in me and enabled me to bring this task to its completion.

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Helsinki, on the 4th week of Advent 2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Ilmari Karimies'. The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name 'Ilmari' and last name 'Karimies' clearly distinguishable.

Ilmari Karimies



# Contents

Abstract .....	3
Acknowledgements .....	4
Contents .....	8
1. Introduction.....	10
1.1. The Rationale of the Study .....	10
1.2. The Aim, Methods and Outline of the Study .....	17
1.3. The Sources of the Study.....	19
2. Luther's Understanding of Reality .....	22
2.1. The Question of Luther's Platonism in Previous Research .....	22
2.2. God .....	30
2.2.1. God as the Eternally Moving and Resting Trinity.....	30
2.2.2. God as the Highest Good and Giver .....	37
2.2.3. God as Light and Wisdom .....	45
2.2.4. God as Incomprehensible and Hidden .....	51
2.2.4.1 The Different Aspects of God's Incomprehensibility and Hiddenness.....	51
2.2.4.2 God as Incomprehensible .....	55
2.2.4.3 God as Hidden .....	66
2.3. Universe.....	70
2.3.1. The Creation as a Sign .....	70
2.3.2. The Works of God .....	76
2.3.3. The Relationship of the Visible and Invisible World .....	82
2.3.3.1 Their General Nature.....	82
2.3.3.2 Can they be Interpreted Non-Ontologically? .....	85
2.3.3.3 The Three Stages as the Key: Visible Creation, Church, Heavenly Glory .....	87
2.4. The Human Being.....	94
2.4.1. Composition.....	94
2.4.1.1 The Natural Constituents (Body, Soul, Spirit) .....	94
2.4.1.2 The Role of the Spirit as the Determining Part .....	117
2.4.1.3 Spirit and Flesh as a Qualitative Distinction .....	124
2.4.2. The Christian .....	129
2.4.2.1 The Infusion of Faith – the Creation of the Spirit .....	129
2.4.2.2 The Duality of Christian Existence: The Conflict between the Spirit and the Flesh .....	134
2.4.2.3 The Relationship of the Flesh and the Spirit in the Same Person .....	141
3. Luther's Understanding of Faith.....	150
3.1. The Question of the Light of Faith and the Intellect of Faith in Previous Research .....	150
3.2. Luther's Relation to the Tradition of Divine Illumination .....	163
3.2.1. The General Development of the Theory from Augustine to the Nominalists....	163
3.2.2. Traditional Interpretations of Ps. 4:7 .....	172
3.2.3. Luther's Interpretation of Ps. 4:7: The Light of the Face of God as the Light of Faith.....	179
3.3. The Functions of the Light of Faith.....	188
3.3.1. The Light of Faith in Relation to God .....	188



3.3.1.1	Faith as Actual and Direct Cognition and Union with Christ .....	188
3.3.1.2	The Cognition of God in Relation to the Intellect .....	194
3.3.1.3	The Cognition of God in Relation to the Affect .....	201
3.3.2.	The Light of Faith in Relation to the Universe .....	204
3.3.2.1	Faith as Intellectual Illumination .....	204
3.3.2.2	Faith as Moral Direction .....	225
3.4.	Faith as the Enigmatic Middle Stage between the Earthly and Heavenly Vision ....	236
3.4.1.	Faith as Theological Sign and Partial Possession .....	236
3.4.2.	Faith and the Human Nature of Christ .....	244
3.4.3.	Faith and the Conflict between the Spirit and the Flesh .....	252
3.5.	Faith as Beliefs and Trust .....	257
3.5.1.	Acquired and Infused Faith .....	257
3.5.2.	Tribulations as a Test of Trust and Teacher of Faith .....	261
4.	Conclusions .....	265
5.	Bibliography .....	282
5.1.	Sources .....	282
5.1.1.	Editions and Abbreviations Used .....	282
5.1.2.	Martin Luther .....	283
5.1.3.	Ancient and Medieval Authors .....	283
5.2.	Literature .....	285

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. The Rationale of the Study

Near the beginning of his second encyclical, *Spe salvi* (2007), Pope Benedict XVI presents the question of how the definition of faith given in Hebrews 11:1 should be interpreted. Seeing in the issue a major dispute between Lutherans and Catholics not only with regard to exegesis, but in the definition of faith as well, he states:

Ever since the Reformation there has been a dispute among exegetes over the central word of this phrase, but today a way towards a common interpretation seems to be opening up once more. [...] “Faith is the *hypostasis* of things hoped for; the proof of things not seen”. For the Fathers and for the theologians of the Middle Ages, it was clear that the Greek word *hypostasis* was to be rendered in Latin with the term *substantia*. The Latin translation of the text produced at the time of the early Church therefore reads: *Est autem fides sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium*—faith is the “substance” of things hoped for; the proof of things not seen.<sup>1</sup>

Thus for Benedict there are two conflicting interpretations of the verse with regard to the words *substantia* and *argumentum*, as to whether they are understood to refer to a present reality or to an absent object of hope. Presenting the Catholic stance Benedict refers to Thomas Aquinas, whom he sees as substantiating the first view:

Saint Thomas Aquinas[4], using the terminology of the philosophical tradition to which he belonged, explains it as follows: faith is a *habitus*, that is, a stable disposition of the spirit, through which eternal life takes root in us and reason is led to consent to what it does not see. The concept of “substance” is therefore modified in the sense that through faith, in a tentative way, or as we might say “in embryo”—and thus according to the “substance”—there are already present in us the things that are hoped for: the whole, true life. And precisely because the thing itself is already present, this presence of what is to come also creates certainty: this “thing” which must come is not yet visible in the external world (it does not “appear”), but because of the fact that, as an initial and dynamic reality, we carry it within us, a certain perception of it has even now come into existence.<sup>2</sup>

Against the view of Thomas, the Pope sets Luther, who according to him understood faith only in the subjective sense, as an expression of interior attitude, devoid of any reality present within the believer:

To Luther, who was not particularly fond of the *Letter to the Hebrews*, the concept of “substance”, in the context of his view of faith, meant nothing. For this reason he understood the term *hypostasis/substance* not in the objective sense (of a reality present

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<sup>1</sup> Benedict XVI 2007: *Spe salvi*, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Benedict XVI 2007: *Spe salvi*, 7.

within us), but in the subjective sense, as an expression of an interior attitude, and so, naturally, he also had to understand the term *argumentum* as a disposition of the subject.<sup>3</sup>

After analysing the modern exegetical discussion the Pope thus arrives at the following conclusion:

“Yet there can be no question but that this classical Protestant understanding is untenable”[5]. Faith is not merely a personal reaching out towards things to come that are still totally absent: it gives us something. It gives us even now something of the reality we are waiting for, and this present reality constitutes for us a “proof” of the things that are still unseen. Faith draws the future into the present, so that it is no longer simply a “not yet”.<sup>4</sup>

In his text Pope Benedict therefore sets against each other the Thomist definition of faith as a *habitus*, that disposes the subject towards eternal life by setting the person into connection with what he does not yet see, but what is nevertheless as an initial reality already present, and a supposedly Lutheran definition of faith according to which faith would only be a subjective interior attitude, a conviction of things that are not yet present reality. The juxtaposition presented by Benedict is incorrect, however.<sup>5</sup> The present work will argue, that the actual fact is quite the opposite: Luther sees faith as an even stronger participation in the divine reality than the notion of *habitus*, used by Thomas Aquinas, is able to convey. For Thomas, namely, faith as an infused theological virtue is a created similitude of the divine light. But for Luther the light of faith is in itself divine, having God as its immediate object.

The comparison of Pope Benedict allows us to approach the question of the nature of faith in general. As a broad generalization one can make a distinction between two different approaches to defining the concept of faith. The first approach is to analyse faith as being composed of two constituents: an assent (*fides qua*), and the content of faith (*fides quae*). Premodern, modern and postmodern theologians and theologies very often follow this option, differing in the emphasis they place on each of the elements. For example, in doctrinal orthodoxy the accent usually lies on believing the right doctrinal propositions (*fides quae*), so that “faith” primarily means the conceptual content of faith. Classical liberal theology, on the other hand (illustrated for example by Schleiermacher) puts the accent on the subjective faith of the individual (*fides qua*), defined in Schleiermacher’s case as a feeling. An existential and personalist emphasis would define faith as consisting of a relation (*fides qua*) and the object (*fides quae*), the latter understood as a person. A second and structurally different approach, however, that can be characterized as mostly premodern, attempts to define the concept of faith using the notion of intellectual light and illumination. The classical theories of illumination, such as those

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<sup>3</sup> Benedict XVI 2007: *Spe salvi*, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Benedict XVI 2007: *Spe salvi*, 7.

<sup>5</sup> In his conception of the Lutheran understanding of faith Benedict XVI seems to rely on the older German existentialist reading of Luther, represented i.a. by Gerhard Ebeling and Wilfrid Joest. The ontological presuppositions of Joest and Ebeling are subjected to critical examination especially in chapters 2.3.3.2 and 3.4.1 of this work. On similar criticism by Catholic philosopher Jean Borella of the Lutheran concept of faith, and for refutation of that criticism, see also Rinehart 2013; Rinehart 2014.

of Augustine and Bonaventure, contain an ontological link between the object of knowledge and the cognition itself. In this approach the two cannot be separated, as the quality of the cognition is dependent on the nature of the object. When this theory is applied to explain the epistemic nature of faith, faith acquires the nature of immediate and intuitive cognition, i.e., “knowledge of acquaintance”, over against representational and propositional knowledge. Mediating between these two alternatives are the Thomistic and late Franciscan (Scotist and Nominalist) theories of illumination, which also use the notion of the light of faith, but in which the concept of light is interpreted more metaphorically, not as immediate knowledge of an object, but as propositional knowledge granted certainty by supernatural means. For them, faith becomes an infused supernatural virtue, but it grants only a mediated cognition of its object.<sup>6</sup>

The specific background of this dissertation, which examines the nature of Martin Luther’s understanding of faith in relation to its ontological preconditions, has been the work of the so-called Finnish “Mannermaa School” of Luther research. Its basis lies in the work of Tuomo Mannermaa (1937-2015), who served as professor of ecumenics at the University of Helsinki from 1980 to 2000. Under Mannermaa the focus on Luther’s ontological thought became a central aspect of Finnish Luther research.<sup>7</sup> In his groundbreaking study *Christ Present in Faith* (originally published in Finnish as *In ipsa fide Christus adest*) Mannermaa observed that at the heart of Luther’s teaching on justification lies an ontological or *real-ontic* idea of union with Christ in faith, who is present in the faith of the believer, and that this idea is analogous to the Orthodox understanding of justification as deification (*theosis*).<sup>8</sup>

However, when one looks at the different definitions of faith, simply citing the concept of union does not suffice to explain what faith is. Even if faith is defined as union with its object, Christ, one also needs to explain what the relation of the ontological union is to the cognition – e.g. knowledge, trust or assent – of the faithful subject. Could the supposition of the union be abolished without affecting faith as cognition, or is there an intrinsic

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<sup>6</sup> As a comprehensive overview of the uses of the concept of faith in different theological contexts see Grünschloß, Schultz et al. 2011. Classical and medieval interpretations of the theory of illumination will be analysed in chapter 3.2. For a modern Catholic synthesis and definition of the nature of faith see Francis 2013: *Lumen Fidei*. In Medieval theology the question of the relation faith as cognition has to its object, especially in the sense of whether the certitude of faith is of an epistemological or volitional nature, is connected to the debate around whether theology can be considered as a science. If certitude is not based on the evidentiality of the contents of faith, but on the effect of grace on the will, then theology is not a proper science. See Hägglund 1955, 22-42.

<sup>7</sup> Saarinen 2015 gives an overview of Tuomo Mannermaa’s life work with Luther studies in Finnish. Up-to-date information on the Finnish Luther research can also be found on Professor Risto Saarinen’s web page: <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/ristosaarinen/luther-studies-in-finland/>. Recent published overviews of Finnish Luther research are also available in print in English (Forsberg 2010; Saarinen 2010; Saarinen 2012) and in German (Forsberg 2005). There are also two collections of articles in English covering the Finnish research: Braaten, Jenson 1998: *Union With Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther* and Vainio 2010: *Engaging Luther. A (New) Theological Assessment*.

<sup>8</sup> Mannermaa 1979. Published in German as *Der im Glauben gegenwärtige Christus* (Mannermaa 1989) and in English as *Christ Present in Faith* (Mannermaa 2005). The Finnish scholarship even influenced the ecumenical process that led to the signing of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. Especially important was the participation in the dialogues by former Professor of Dogmatics and colleague of Mannermaa, Bishop of Helsinki Eero Huovinen, who also wrote several works on Luther’s theology of faith, as well as the dissertation of Simo Peura regarding theosis and justification (Peura 1994). This Finnish contribution to the dialogue process is described by Forsberg 1997.

connection between them? The question of the specific ontological or metaphysical<sup>9</sup> nature of the union that has been the central finding of the Finnish School has up until now remained open.<sup>10</sup>

Mannermaa's first and major study on the subject, *Christ Present in Faith*, brings to light the widely known text in which Luther describes faith as darkness that sees nothing and a cloud in the heart, where Christ is present.<sup>11</sup> Though Mannermaa's emphasis in this work is on the ontological idea of Christ as the form of faith, he also makes some brief comments regarding the cognitive nature of faith. First, he interprets the dark cloud which surrounds Christ as signifying partially the law through which the believer is humbled, partially the obscurity of God's providence.<sup>12</sup> Mannermaa also argues that in Luther's view human beings cannot gain any knowledge of the presence of the spirit dwelling in them by means of their senses.<sup>13</sup> Finally, Mannermaa cites Luther to point out that through the "image of Christ", of which a believer becomes a participant through the means of grace, "God's people understand and know in the same way as Christ does; that is, they understand and know Christ himself".<sup>14</sup> Mannermaa however does not further reflect what this knowing Christ means, or how it is related to the aforementioned darkness which surrounds Christ.

In a later work *Two Kinds of Love* (original edition published in Finnish in 1983 as *Kaksi rakkautta*, expanded edition 1995, English translation 2010) Mannermaa returns to the theme, again with an emphasis on the darkness of faith.<sup>15</sup> There he interprets the darkness in which God is hidden by the means of the theology of the Cross: God appears not only as nothing, but as that which is negative and repulsive to human love. According to Mannermaa's interpretation, exactly how God is present cannot be understood by human reason. God dwells only in those who feel in themselves that they are furthest from God and nearest to Satan. Therefore, Mannermaa defines Luther's notion of faith as trust in God and his love hidden in its opposite.<sup>16</sup> Both portrayals are characterized on the one hand by a strong emphasis on the real presence of Christ, but on the other hand a heavy accent on the hiddenness of this presence and its contrariety to experience.

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<sup>9</sup> In this dissertation I use the term "ontology" to refer to considerations concerning the nature of being in general, and the term "metaphysics" as a reference to elaborated and defined systems of ontology. See also footnote 25.

<sup>10</sup> On the question of how the notion of the union might be understood see especially Bielfeldt 1997. Bielfeldt sketches 7 possible models, but stresses that more historical research is required to link Luther's actual thought to them. A more modest attempt consisting of three models is given by Saarinen 1993.

<sup>11</sup> Mannermaa 2005, 26-28. See also WA 40, 1, 228, 27 – 229, 32.

<sup>12</sup> "The 'darkness' and the 'cloud' of faith in which Christ, in Luther's view, is really present, is therefore obviously also the kind of 'darkness' and 'turning into nothing' that follows from gaining self-knowledge through the law. [...] It is true, however, that the 'darkness' of faith does not only refer to the darkness brought by the law. That 'obscurity', for example, which prevails when one believes in God's rule and providence, is also part of this darkness. On the other hand, it is nevertheless obvious that the 'nothingness' and 'darkness' brought about one's self-knowledge gained through the law is an essential dimension of the 'darkness' and 'cloud' in which Christ is really present." Mannermaa 2005, 35-36.

<sup>13</sup> Mannermaa 2005, 73-79.

<sup>14</sup> Mannermaa 2005, 83.

<sup>15</sup> Mannermaa 1983; Mannermaa 1995. Published in English as *Two Kinds of Love. Martin Luther's Religious World* (Mannermaa 2010).

<sup>16</sup> Mannermaa 2010, 37-38; 59-62; 82-84.

However, a very different image of the cognitive nature of faith emerges from the work I consider the the most important of Mannermaa's writings on the topic: the 1994 article *Hat Luther eine trinitarische Ontologie?*<sup>17</sup> In the first and second parts of his article Mannermaa discusses the Trinitarian ontology of Luther's early Christmas sermon of 1514.<sup>18</sup> In this sermon Luther examines the whole structure of reality from the perspective of the identity of essence and act, first of all in God, but likewise in all creation. As background for this idea Luther uses the Aristotelian notion of the relation of potency (*potentia*) to its object, for example intellection and sense perception, where the potency in a certain way becomes identical with the form it perceives. Mannermaa stresses that according to Luther's view expressed in this sermon, God is the essence itself of the blessed (*ipsa essentia beatorum*).<sup>19</sup> In the third part of the article Mannermaa discusses the way Luther speaks about faith as a light in which God and the believer become one. He refers to Luther's agreement with the so called Platonic principle of epistemology, *simile simili cognosci* (like is known by like), which Luther explicitly quotes in his writings. According to Mannermaa, union with Christ in faith reflects the ontological aspect of Luther's thought, but this union also has its epistemological side. In accordance with the Platonic principle it is exactly through this union between the believer and Christ that God becomes knowable. In contrast to the two previous works (i.e., *Christ Present in Faith* and *Two Kinds of Love*), in this article Mannermaa speaks of faith as light: God is the light, by the participation in which a human being is able know God.<sup>20</sup> Thus the divine nature becomes the central concept of knowledge instead of human nature, and faith is not portrayed as darkness and trust, but as a cognitive light that is ontologically divine.

The picture that emerges from Mannermaa's writings regarding the cognitive nature of faith thus seems very unclear. Is God known only through the human nature which Christ assumed in the Incarnation, or through the divine nature in which one participates in the union through faith? Is faith a darkness in which Christ is secretly present, or an ontologically divine light making the presence of God known? Or perhaps it is both – but if this is the case, then what is the relation of these two? Mannermaa fails to relate the different views to each other, no doubt because he discusses these different aspects in different works. Neither of Mannermaa's students, Simo Peura in his doctoral dissertation *Mehr als ein Mensch?* (1994)<sup>21</sup>, or Sammeli Juntunen in his dissertation *Der Begriff des Nichts bei Luther in den Jahren von 1510 bis 1523* (1996), sheds much light on this subject.<sup>22</sup> The only Finnish scholar to clarify the relationship of the light and darkness of faith is Antti Raunio, who discusses the question in his short textbook article *Onko*

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<sup>17</sup> *Hat Luther eine trinitarische Ontologie?* Mannermaa 1994. Original shorter German version (Mannermaa 1993a) and Finnish version *Onko Lutherilla teologista ontologiaa?* (Mannermaa 1993b) lack the discussion on *vestigia trinitatis*.

<sup>18</sup> *Sermo Lutheri In Natali Christi*, WA 1, 20-29.

<sup>19</sup> Mannermaa 1994, 43-53.

<sup>20</sup> Mannermaa 1994, 57-60.

<sup>21</sup> Peura 1994, 200-202 discusses the nature of faith as light, pointing to the connection between the ontological and cognitive aspects in a similar manner as Mannermaa 1994: God himself is the light through which he is known. But a few pages later also he (Peura 1994, 207) states that faith is darkness. Like Mannermaa, Peura does not offer any explanation of the relationship between the two.

<sup>22</sup> Juntunen 1996, 383-387; 396-400 offers some interesting points regarding the nature of faith, however. According to him, the object of faith is such in its nature, that human cognitive capacities are not suited to approach it. Juntunen therefore portrays the cognitive nature of faith primarily as darkness.

*olemassa luterilaista spiritualiteettia?* There Raunio attempts to define faith separately in relation to reason and in relation to the intellect. According to Raunio, faith is gloom and darkness in relation to reason, but for the spiritual intellect, to which the natural light of the reason does not extend, it is also a looking at and beholding of Christ. Thus Luther, according to Raunio, conceives faith as a ray of divinity, which warms up the will up to love, and which illumines the intellect to view the image of God, present to help, inscribed onto the heart of the believer. In the light of faith, the illuminated heart and the illuminating God become one.<sup>23</sup> Raunio's article therefore offers a starting point for approaching the relationship between the light and darkness of faith, and also repeats the idea of the unity of the ontological and cognitive aspects of faith, initially offered by Mannermaa in his *Hat Luther eine trinitarische Ontologie?* Nevertheless, it remains but a short textbook article containing no references and published only in Finnish. It is not a proper academic research text. Furthermore, the significance of the humanity of Christ with regard to the nature of faith as light is left unclear in the text.

As can be seen, the question of the relationship of the ontological and cognitive aspects of faith: i.e., the relation between the union with Christ and the cognitive nature of faith, is to a great degree connected with the Finnish School of Luther interpretation for which the union is a central concept. With their mostly existentialist premises, the older German interpretations of Luther's concept of faith differ significantly from the Finnish approach. Over against the German tendency to read Luther through the lenses of modernity, the Finnish research is characterized by a systematic analysis of concepts and arguments within the text, as well as by the attempt to read Luther in closer contact with his Late Medieval background, building connections to the history of dogma and the history of ideas. For this reason, the work of previous Finnish researchers forms an important background for my research. However, the above overview shows, that especially with regard to the relationship of the ontological and cognitive aspects of faith, faith as light and darkness, and faith as connected to divinity and humanity, no complete or satisfactory explanation on the relationship of these aspects has yet been given in Finnish research on Luther. Nevertheless, the question of how these aspects are related is central for understanding the nature of faith in Luther's theology. The problem, however, is not constituted only by the previous research *per se*, but by the dichotomies between humanity and divinity, darkness and light, absence and presence contained in Luther's own texts which themselves require explanation.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover, as this study will seek to demonstrate, the ontological nature of the union with Christ, which is of major significance for the cognitive nature of faith, cannot actually be treated separately from the entire ontological substructure of Luther's thought. Luther's whole theological cosmology or understanding of reality (*Wirklichkeitsverständnis*) has to be taken into consideration. This understanding includes the nature of God, the nature of the universe and the nature of the human being, and the way these are related to each other, both concretely and through the general ontological principles reflected by them. The rationale for this is that the notion of faith in the theology of Martin Luther has both the function of cognition of God and the function of an interpretative capacity with regard to the universe. Furthermore, faith as a capacity has its

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<sup>23</sup>Raunio 2003, 28-32.

<sup>24</sup> See e.g. AWA 2, 106, 28-108, 5; AWA 2, 139, 7 - 140, 26 vs. AWA 2, 200, 3 - 201, 15.

place in the constitution of the human being. As such, the cognitive capacity of faith is therefore related to three different areas of reality: 1) God and 2) the universe, which are in a certain way its objects; and 3) the human person, in whom faith is actualized. The system formed by the relations of these three can be called “theological ontology”, “cosmology” or “understanding of reality” – each term meaning approximately the same, but with different connotations.<sup>25</sup> The nature of faith as cognition is related to the ontological nature of the system as a whole, as well as to its individual components.

From the above considerations it follows that one must take into account not only the general research on the notion of faith on Luther, but also research on many topics that intersect with the notion of faith. Both of the main chapters of the present study begin with a review of the research immediately relevant to its particular subject.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, in the subchapters more literature relevant to each subchapter will be introduced. Regarding the view of the nature of God I especially utilize Mannermaa, but also the previous research on Luther’s relation to mystical theology and the concept of *deus absconditus*, as well as research connected to history of ideas in Medieval Trinitarian theology.<sup>27</sup> In relation to the question of the general nature of Luther’s ontology or understanding of reality I approach the issue based on the Platonism thesis of August Wilhelm Hunzinger and its critical reception by Gerhard Ebeling, Wilfrid Joest, Steven Ozment and William J. Wright, as well as the findings of Edward Cranz, Sammeli Juntunen and Leif Grane.<sup>28</sup> Regarding theological anthropology I build upon the studies of Lauri Haikola, Herbert Olsson and Eero Huovinen, again in light of the critical examination of Joest and Ozment.<sup>29</sup> Regarding Luther’s understanding of faith, much of the previous research has major limitations: they wholly omit the notion of faith as illumination. Moreover, some of the prominent works focus only on one source (especially the *Dictata super Psalterium*), not on the entire period of Luther’s early lectures, which due to the limited nature of the research material has in my opinion led to skewed and contradictory interpretations.<sup>30</sup> Due to these issues the background of my study in this question has been formed by research in the history of ideas of different interpretations of the doctrine of illumination in the Latin tradition. My purpose is to try to locate the place of Luther’s theology within that tradition.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, previous significant interpretations of faith as offered by older Luther research are also taken into account.<sup>32</sup> The special challenge of this work with

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<sup>25</sup> Of the previous researchers on this subject Hunzinger uses all three terms, whereas Ebeling and Wright prefer the term *Wirklichkeitverständnis*, or understanding of reality. In Finnish research the term ontology (Fin. “*ontologia*”, Ger. “*Ontologie*”) is often used. In this work I use the term ‘metaphysics’ to denote a strictly defined system, ‘ontology’ as a broader term emphasizing how the concept of being is understood, ‘cosmology’ when the structural analogies between God, the Universe (major cosmos) and the composition of the human being (minor cosmos) is emphasized, and ‘understanding of reality’ to denote the general nature of ontological and cosmological thought.

<sup>26</sup> See chapters 2.1 The Question of Luther’s Platonism and 3.1 The Question of the Light of Faith and the Intellect of Faith.

<sup>27</sup> See Mannermaa 1994. Discussion of Trinitarian theology can be found in chapters 2.2.1 to 2.2.2 and discussion of mystical theology and the *deus absconditus* in chapter 2.2.4.

<sup>28</sup> Hunzinger 1905; Ebeling 1951; Joest 1967; Ozment 1969; Wright 2010; Cranz 1959; Juntunen 1996; Juntunen 1998; Grane 1997. See the research history in chapter 2.1.

<sup>29</sup> See Haikola 1958; Olsson 1971; Huovinen 1981; Huovinen 1997; Huovinen 2009.

<sup>30</sup> This is the case with Ozment 1969 and Schwarz 1962, who use only *Dictata super Psalterium*.

<sup>31</sup> See chapter 3.2.

<sup>32</sup> See chapter 3.1.



regard to the secondary literature is that the research question is situated at an intersection of numerous theologically significant topics, of which there is a vast amount of secondary literature. Due to this challenge some topics potentially of significance to the question have been left outside the present study. The most important of these is the question of the nature of Luther's theology of the Cross, for which the findings of this study are very relevant. However, this subject is not examined within this work systematically, but only sporadically in connection with issues where it has relevance for the topic. Due the nature of the present study, beside the chapters on research history one should also check the references in each chapter to locate the relevant secondary literature.

## **1.2. The Aim, Methods and Outline of the Study**

The aim of the present study is to investigate and clarify Martin Luther's understanding of faith and his understanding of reality in his biblical lectures between the years 1513 and 1521. The method of the study is systematic analysis. By systematic analysis I mean a consistent method of close reading that reconstructs the meaning of concepts, arguments and their implicit as well as explicit preconditions. The analysis progresses from single concepts toward larger arguments and structures. Unless significant historical development can be observed, I strive to represent the results as systematized summaries, first in each chapter and then in the final conclusions of the study.

With regard to its content this work can also be seen as an investigation of theological or philosophical psychology and an investigation in the history of ideas or dogma, as the results show how faith functions as a cognitive capacity in the context formed by Luther's theological anthropology and understanding of reality. Though the aim of this study is not to provide an historical explanation of the origins of Luther's thought, the results of this study are nevertheless often compared with Luther's predecessors (both single authors and traditions of thought) with the explicit aim of locating Luther within the wider metaphysical and epistemological traditions of Christian theology. Sometimes the study will even compare concrete texts in order to show parallels and point to Luther's use of sources and their influence on his use of concepts. At places this is done merely for the sake of furthering the understanding of Luther's use of preceding authors unrecognized by previous research – but in terms of the big picture it is my intention to compare Luther especially with the Augustinian tradition of Christian Platonism, which can be seen as one of the theological schools of the Middle Ages. Some central features of this so-called Augustinian School are: its peculiar combination of the Platonism of Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius, reflected e.g. in the application of the Platonic principle of the good to Trinitarian theology, and the application of a metaphysics of light to the nature of reality and to the functions of the human cognition, as seen especially in the doctrine of divine illumination central to the Augustinian tradition. The emphasis of the study is on theological Augustinianism, especially with regard to epistemology, represented by the Augustinian School. It needs to be distinguished from the more practical Augustinian monastic life, represented by the Augustinian order, as the theology of the order did not

follow Augustine when it came to epistemology.<sup>33</sup> Within the context of this work Luther's ideas are thus compared especially to Augustinianism represented by the early Augustinian scholasticism of the Victorines and Bonaventure as well as Jean Gerson, whose theology can be seen as being in continuity with basic tenets of the illumination model developed by Bonaventure. This is done with the aim to demonstrate that Luther's concepts and arguments can best be comprehended in relation to that tradition: either as in continuity with it, or as developments which have it as their background. The present study suggests, that to measure continuity one should ask, whether the texts of the author manifest concepts, ideas and arguments held in common with the aforementioned Augustinian School and the Platonic tradition associated with it, and whether the arguments expressed would be intelligible from within the premises of that tradition.<sup>34</sup> Especially in this sense, besides being a work of systematic analysis, this dissertation is also a work in the history of ideas.

Besides this introduction and the conclusions, this dissertation consists of two main chapters. The research is carried out by first examining Luther's understanding of reality, which takes place in the first main chapter (chapter 2). The chapter contains an introduction to the research history on the topic (2.1) as well as three subchapters, which address Luther's understanding of God (chapter 2.2), the universe (2.3) and the human being (2.4). In this chapter I will argue that Luther's understanding of reality is of a Platonic nature, and related especially to the Augustinian tradition exemplified by the Victorines and Bonaventure. This conclusion has consequences for how the nature of God, the relation between the invisible and the visible world, and the location of faith in Luther's theological anthropology should be understood. The second main chapter (chapter 3) examines Luther's understanding of faith. It also contains an introduction to

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<sup>33</sup> This way of thought can be described in general as Augustinianism or the Augustinian school, but it incorporated into itself Neoplatonic elements especially from Pseudo-Dionysius and can thus be characterized as generally Platonist over against Aristotelian Thomism and later nominalism. As Bonaventure is the most famous representative of the school, this school became associated especially with Franciscanism, but it is to be distinguished from the later Franciscan theology of Scotus and Occam that follows the *via moderna*, theology which completely overturned its Platonist fundamentals in ontology and epistemology. One should furthermore note that the focus of the definition of Augustinianism is here on epistemology, not on the more practical and historical appreciation of Augustine represented by the Augustinian order. In this regard Bonaventure is often seen as the most Augustinian theologian of the Middle Ages, though he belonged to the Franciscan order. On the other hand, the late mediaeval theologians of the Augustinian, such as Gregory of Rimini, do not follow an Augustinian epistemology, but are influenced by nominalism, as are the late Franciscans. Their Augustinianism is reflected in their treatment of the topics such as sin, freedom of the will and predestination. As a thorough overview of how the schools have been differentiated in research on Scholasticism see Marrone 2001, 1-4; 18-25. See also Schumacher 2011, 85-153 and the analysis of the development of the doctrine of illumination from Augustine to the Nominalists in chapter 3.2.1 of the present work. On the Augustinianism of the Augustinian order see Werner 1883; Steinmetz 1968; Oberman, James et al. 1991 and Saak 2002. Saak examines the research history of the definition of Augustinianism spanning the course of a century (pp. 681-691) and the relation of Luther's relation to the theology of the Augustinian order (pp. 691-708). As the state of the question regarding the theology of the order, one can say that Luther's familiarity with the major theologians representing the Augustinian eremites, such as Gregory of Rimini, remains unsolved, and even if there is influence, it has to do with areas of theology other than the epistemology of faith.

<sup>34</sup> The criteria I am proposing here for measuring whether a text can be seen in the context of Augustinian Platonist thought are correlated to the discussion on the definition of mysticism as expressed in the second definition given by McGinn 1991, xiv-xv; Leppin 2007, 167-168 and Hamm 2007, 242-243. According to this option the defining criteria are: historical continuity and the place of the text in the tradition.

the research history, which focuses especially on how the concepts of the light of faith and the intellect of faith have been interpreted in previous research on Luther's theology of faith (chapter 3.1). The body of the chapter is comprised of the subchapters which address Luther's relation to the tradition of divine illumination (3.2), the functions of the light of faith in Luther's theology (3.3), faith as the enigmatic middle stage between the earthly and heavenly vision (3.4) and faith as beliefs and trust (3.5). In this second main chapter I will argue that Luther's understanding of faith follows the doctrine of intellectual illumination and its classical non-metaphorical interpretation offered by Augustine, Bonaventure and Gerson. Luther's understanding of the light of faith is analysed in relation to the other Medieval and Late Medieval interpretations (i.e., Thomism and the *via moderna*), and its functions in relation to God and the universe are examined with reference to the aforementioned traditions. In addition, the role of propositional beliefs and trust in Luther's understanding of faith, especially in tribulations, is analysed. These two have a special role in the tribulations that is an exception from the illuminationist immediacy of faith, because in the tribulations the direct cognition of God is withheld. The results of the study are presented in the conclusions (chapter 4).

### 1.3. The Sources of the Study

The sources of the dissertation are all of Luther's early Biblical commentaries and lecture series delivered at the University of Wittenberg between 1513 and 1521.<sup>35</sup> The first of these are the *Dictata super Psalterium*, Luther's (first) *Lectures on the Psalms* held between 1513 and 1515. They are published in two editions within the Weimarer Ausgabe: WA 3 and 4; WA 55, I and II. Of these I will use exclusively the latter, modern, edition (WA 55). Its first volume (WA 55, I) contains interlinear and marginal glosses to the printed text of the Psalms and the second volume (WA 55, II) contains Luther's scholia to selected Psalm verses. Both are originally handwritten manuscripts, out the basis of which Luther delivered his lectures. His students were given the same printed Psalm texts on which to write down their notes after Luther's dictation, but no such notes are extant from these lectures.<sup>36</sup> Regarding the textual basis of the scholia it is to be noted that a few pages containing a later exposition of Psalm 1, dated 1516, have been added at the beginning of the manuscript (WA 55, II, 1-24). Luther's original material from 1513 begins on page 25. A similar gap exists between Psalms 2 and 4, with the original scholia ending at page 46 of WA 55 (Ps. 2:3). These have been replaced with an exposition of Ps. 4 of 1516. The newer text continues until page 85, after which the text of the original manuscript continues with some of the remaining scholia of Ps. 4. A few other pages are missing from the manuscript as well, but they have not been replaced with newer material.<sup>37</sup> Besides these, there also remain the so-called *Vatican Fragments* of Ps. 4 and 5, which have received variable datings, but are usually considered to have been written in 1516/1517. They are published in AWA 1, 467-558. They illustrate the development of

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<sup>35</sup> For a general introduction to these see Wolff 2005, 322-323.

<sup>36</sup> On the historical background of the lectures see WA 55, I, L-LIV.

<sup>37</sup> See WA 55, II, XX-XLVII; AWA 1, 50-52.

Luther's interpretation of the Psalms which are especially important with respect to the subject matter of this dissertation. They have therefore been included in the primary sources, although their relationship to Luther's lectures is not clear. Either they represent preparations for a new lecture series on the Psalms, which was ultimately not held, or for a printed edition of *Dictata*, which was not realised.<sup>38</sup> The second lecture series I have used as a source is Luther's *Lectures on Romans* from 1515-1516, published in WA 56. This text is as well divided into glosses and scholia. It contains the original lectures without omissions or supplements, therefore requiring no significant textual considerations.<sup>39</sup> From these lectures a set of listener's notes, discovered in the Vatican Libraries in 1899 and published at WA 57, 1-232 also remains, but in my work I have only used Luther's personal manuscript, as its contents can be trusted to give the most accurate picture of Luther's own thoughts.<sup>40</sup> The third lecture series falling into the time frame of my research is Luther's first *Lectures on Galatians* (1516-1517). Of these lectures only student's notes containing both glosses and scholia are available, published in WA 57, a1-a108.<sup>41</sup> Luther's own manuscript has been lost, but it has probably served as the basis for the later printed work known as the first *Commentary on Galatians*. Before that work, however, Luther also lectured in 1517-1518 on Hebrews. These *Lectures on Hebrews* follow the same model of glosses and scholia as the previous ones. Luther's own manuscript of this text has been lost as well, but the lectures are preserved in two sets of students' notes, one less complete than the other. Having been written from dictation the notes are similar enough to have been edited into a single text published at WA 57, b1-238.<sup>42</sup> After the Hebrews lectures Luther quickly edited his Galatians lectures into a commentary known as the first or small *Commentary on Galatians*. The printed text is much expanded and varied, although it follows the lectures closely at some points. The first edition of the *Commentary* appeared in print in 1519 and the second edition, containing a number of alterations by Luther, in 1523. The critical edition of the commentary is published at WA 2, 443-618.<sup>43</sup> Finally, the last text used as an essential source of this thesis is Luther's *Second Psalm Commentary*, ie. *Operationes in Psalmos* published over a two year period between 1519 and 1521. The text contains Luther's exposition of the first 22 Psalms of the Latin Psalter (1-21 of the Hebrew). The work is based on Luther's lectures on the Psalms held at the University of Wittenberg between 1518 and 1520. Like the *Commentary on Galatians*, it does not follow the earlier format of glosses and scholia, but represents a complete text prepared for publication by Luther himself. The first five psalms appeared in print in 1519 and further parts of the work were published as the lectures progressed, until Luther had to interrupt his work in order to travel to the Diet of Worms. The last Psalm

<sup>38</sup> See AWA 1, 52-58. There are also short scholia of Ps. 22-24 published at WA 31, I, 464-481 that have been hypothesized to be a part of the same work. They have not been used in this dissertation. On them see AWA 1, 58-62.

<sup>39</sup> On the precise dates of the lectures and the condition of the manuscript see WA 56, XII-XIII; XXVI-XXIX.

<sup>40</sup> On the nature of these notes see WA 57, XI-XXXII.

<sup>41</sup> On the dates of the lectures and the history of these notes see WA 57, aIII-aaXXII. While referring to a volume of the WA containing multiple sets of works with their own page numbers I will use the pagination of the electronic edition of WA, with the first work referred to as *n*, second as *an*, third as *bn* etc. where *n* stands for the printed page number.

<sup>42</sup> On the dates of the lectures and the history of the notes see WA 57, bIII-bXXVII; AWA 1, 73-74.

<sup>43</sup> On the history of the text see WA 2, 436-442.

(22) was finished and sent to print by Luther from the Wartburg castle in 1521 and the first printed edition including it only appeared in 1523.<sup>44</sup> The entire commentary was published in WA 5, but a better modern edition of the first 10 Psalms of the commentary has been published in the Archiv zur Weimarer Ausgabe (AWA) series, volume 2. I have used this edition for the Psalms contained therein and the older edition in WA 5 for the rest.

The selection of sources has been made with the following points in mind. First of all, the lectures and their published versions make up a representative aggregate of Luther's thoughts and their development as expressed in public and given in a university environment. Together they contain enough material in order to acquire a representative picture of Luther's ideas regarding the subjects examined, as well as of possible chronological developments in his thought. Second, the selection can be justified historically. The texts written before the diet of Worms (1521) are aimed at an academic audience and are less polemical in nature, whereas after 1521 Luther had to focus on polemical writings and texts dealing with practical questions regarding the execution of the Reformation. Third, the perspective of the history of ideas justifies the selection. The authors and theological schools that influenced the development of Luther's thought are more perceptible in the early writings. They are sometimes even pointed out by name by Luther himself. Finally, the subject matter justifies the selection. Questions pertaining to ontology and cosmology are especially treated in the *Psalm Lectures*, and anthropological questions form a common thread running through all the aforementioned sources. Finally, the notion of faith is treated extensively in the works on the Psalms.

Alongside the above selection, however, from time to time I have also referred to other of Luther's works. These include: Luther's annotations to Tauler's sermons (WA 9, 95-104), a *Christmas Sermon* of 1514/1515 (WA 1, 20-29), *From the Freedom of a Christian* of 1520 (WA 7, 12-38), the *Disputation of Infused and Acquired Faith* (WA 6, 83-86) as well as its *Resolutions* (WA 6, 87-98) of 1520, the *Fourteen Consolations* (WA 6, 104-134) of the same year, Luther's *Commentary on the Magnificat* of 1521 (WA 7, 538-604) and *From the Bondage of the Will* of 1525 (WA 18, 551-787). In addition, a few of the Table Talks have been quoted. These texts are used to illustrate developments or to bring ideas into a wider context, but not as an exclusive foundation for the ideas presented. In the same way I have also referred to a number of works of Antique, Patristic and Medieval authors such as Aristotle, Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Gregory the Great, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Johannes Duns Scotus, Jean Gerson, Gabriel Biel and Jodocus Trutvetter.

With regard to the English translations of Luther's texts, unless otherwise noted, the texts have been translated from WA. I have used Concordia Publishing's *Luther's Works* (LW) as a baseline when it is close enough to the original Latin, but in most cases modifications have been needed to achieve terminological precision in significant parts of the texts. The quotes of the texts for which there is no English translation (such as the glosses of *Dictata* (WA 55, I) and Psalms 3-22 of the *Operationes in Psalmos* (AWA 2 / WA 5)) have been translated entirely from scratch.

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<sup>44</sup> See WA 5, 1-7; AWA 1, 4-5; 107-116; 125-177. The volume AWA 1 is for most of its part a historical-theological introduction to the *Operationes*.

## 2. Luther's Understanding of Reality

### 2.1. The Question of Luther's Platonism in Previous Research

As stated in the introduction, for Luther faith has both a function as cognition of God and a function as an interpretative capacity with regard to the universe (i.e., the created world). Furthermore, faith has a place in the constitution of the human person as well. It is therefore related to three different areas of reality: 1) God and 2) the universe, as well as 3) the human being, in whom faith is actualized. Therefore, forming an adequate picture of faith in the theology of Martin Luther requires examining all these three components as well as their mutual relations.

The aim of this main chapter (chapter 2) is to form a picture of Luther's understanding of reality. In this task the above three components of reality and their interrelatedness in Martin Luther's theology is examined. What is sought is to form a composite picture in which the so-called cosmology or understanding of reality of the subject theologian is examined in order to bring individual ideas into the context of the whole. Through this examination we will seek to demonstrate that the close relation between the three is intrinsic for Luther's theology as a whole. This is particularly manifested by the allegory of the Tent of the Covenant, which Luther recurrently uses to illustrate all three: the anthropological division of the human person, the relation of the visible and invisible world, and the relation of God and the human being. I will further argue that such an approach to Luther is appropriate, given the nature of Luther's ontology and understanding of reality, which can be described as Christian Platonism related to the Augustinian School, drawing from Augustine but integrating also elements from e.g. Pseudo-Dionysius, the Victorines and Bonaventure. Furthermore, I will argue that Luther's theology of faith can be understood best, and even understood fully, only with these ontological preconditions as its background.

The thesis of the Platonic nature of Luther's cosmology was first made by August Wilhelm Hunzinger in his 1905 licentiate thesis *Luthers Neuplatonismus in der Psalmenvorlesung von 1513-1516*. Hunzinger's central claim is that Luther's earliest Psalm Lectures (*Dictata super Psalterium* 1513-1515) are penetrated by a principally Platonic philosophical (realist) ontology of Neo-Platonist origin, the basic character of which is the ontological division of the cosmos into two kinds of objects of opposite natures: the sensible (*sensibilia*); and the spiritual (*spiritualia*) i.e., intelligible (*intelligibilia*). The former are distinct, many, divided and changing whereas the latter are universal, simple, indivisible, one and unchangeable.<sup>45</sup> This difference is not based on a dualistic ontology (of two different cosmic fundamental principles) or a doctrine of emanation, but on the notion of God creating two different kinds of creatures *ex nihilo*. Hunzinger agrees that Luther discusses the more precise relationship between these two and their relation to God very sparingly – a difficulty I also share. Nevertheless, he states that the world of the *spiritualia* is on the one hand closely connected and even equated with God. It is composed of truths (*veritates*): ideas, forms and reasons (*ideae, formae,*

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<sup>45</sup> Hunzinger 1905, especially pages 1-7.

*rationes*), through which God is grasped, and forms their apex. On the other hand, however, the intelligible creatures of the spiritual sphere seem to possess an existence of their own, distinct from God, and form an invisible created world.<sup>46</sup> Hunzinger concludes that at the heart of this division between the two worlds lies Luther's Platonic concept of being: Real being is immutable and undifferentiated, and God is the only such being. Creatures truly *are* only insofar they exist in God, and when they turn to themselves they turn into nothingness. The concept of immutable being also works as the measure of the created beings' reality: The more spiritual the created beings are, the more real they are, and thus behind Luther's ontology is a latent concept of emanation. This Platonic ontology lays the foundation for Luther's thought.

Hunzinger thus accordingly considers that it is this philosophical ontology which makes of the created world the "backside" (i.e., opposite) of God, and thus lays the foundation for the flesh – spirit distinction in Luther's anthropology.<sup>47</sup> In this sense the created things are only a shadow of the true, spiritual reality.<sup>48</sup> According to Hunzinger, the necessity of the Incarnation is based on the difference between these two worlds. The spiritual things are 'open' to everyone, whereas the nature of the visible things is that they conceal. Christ became man to hide his divinity from carnal people, who would only see the opposite of his real being. Consequently Hunzinger describes Luther's Christology as almost docetic.<sup>49</sup> Hunzinger's licentiate thesis also contains an overview of Luther's understanding of sin, anthropology, intellect grasping the invisible (*intellectus invisibilium*) and Luther's concept of faith, in which all these *loci* are examined from the viewpoint of his ontological discovery.<sup>50</sup>

However, it is his general thesis regarding the Platonic nature of Luther's ontology which sparked much discussion in the course of the following century.<sup>51</sup> Among those who received the thesis positively was Edward F. Cranz, who in his work *An Essay on the Development of Luther's Thought on Justice, Law and Society* (1959) in general agrees with Hunzinger with regard to the *Dictata*, though he sees already in that work a transition towards the theology of the Cross.<sup>52</sup> He agrees that the sections of Luther's thought, which he calls "philosophical theology" or "theological philosophy" (as contrasted to a theology of the Cross) "may with qualifications be described as Platonic".<sup>53</sup> Especially important for this qualification are the distinctions between the visible and invisible, the connection of faith to invisible things and the general concept of transitory things being signs of eternal things. However, Cranz also notices already in Luther's early works a movement

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<sup>46</sup> Hunzinger 1905, 8-9; 19. Hunzinger even claims that these truths (*veritates*) are in Luther's thought personalized beings – a statement I consider very farfetched. Luther does, however, speak of good and evil angels and the souls of human beings as spiritual heavens (*caeli spirituales*), but in my opinion these personal agents are to be distinguished from the spiritual truths and ideas.

<sup>47</sup> Hunzinger 1905, 9-11.

<sup>48</sup> Hunzinger 1905, 11-13.

<sup>49</sup> Hunzinger 1905, 13-15.

<sup>50</sup> Hunzinger's treatment of some of these subjects will be discussed more closely in the footnotes of the following chapters.

<sup>51</sup> On the reception and criticism of Hunzinger's thesis see Scheel 1910, 164-173; Hamel 1980, 206-224 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1934); Ebeling 1951, 187-197; Bandt 1958, 44-45; Cranz 1959, 2-11; Metzger 1964, 103-111; Joest 1967, 99-102; Loewenich 1982, 63-72 (6<sup>th</sup> ed. 1967); Ozment 1969, 87-138; Grane 1997.

<sup>52</sup> See Cranz 1959, 2-20. Cranz retained the same view until his death, see Cranz 2000, 189.

<sup>53</sup> Cranz 1959, 2-3.

towards a more paradoxical hiddenness, in which invisible things are not simply contrasted to the visible, but become hidden under *sub contraria* (i.e., under that which is opposite to their proper essence, such as glorious works of God under suffering and shame).<sup>54</sup> In the end Cranz does not categorize Luther's thought in the *Dictata* as Neoplatonist or Augustinian, but instead describes it as "Christian theology in its own right, though we may at the same time note its special connection with various ancient and medieval traditions", although leaving open the question of which specific traditions he means.<sup>55</sup> In what follows, however, I will take a closer look at the two (arguably most influential critics) of Hunzinger, who evaluate Hunzinger's ontological thesis as a whole, and offer a comprehensive alternative to it. I will then examine the latest reception of the Platonism thesis and the discussion of Luther's ontology.

The first opponent of Hunzinger's thesis of significance for the present study was Gerhard Ebeling. In his article *Die Anfänge von Luthers Hermeneutik* published in 1951<sup>56</sup> Ebeling admits that the pairs of contraries Hunzinger's interpretation centers on do appear in Luther's Psalm Commentary. Ebeling claims, however, that the pairs are not to be interpreted ontologically, but rather as a distinction concerning the difference between present and future things. According to Ebeling the metaphysical duality apparent in the Psalm Lectures is not connected with the nature of things, but with the quality of the person *coram deo*; the distinction lies in whether his "substance" (interpreted by Ebeling as existence) is based on things of this life, or on the promises of God concerning the future. As such the divisions are not ontological, but "existential." They do not concern a dualism between two created worlds (visible and spiritual), but a dualism between God and the World – or more precisely – a dualism between two different ways of relating to God. This dualism is based on whether God is seen as turned away from (his backside), or turned towards (his face) the human being. Thus Luther's statements do not properly speak about the nature of things, but rather about the nature of the person before God, and only have a metaphorical meaning. The world is not "nothingness" (*vanitas*) in any ontological sense, but as a sign and figure which points to and anticipates the work of redemption in Christ, Church and Gospel.<sup>57</sup>

The second scholar to offer a comprehensive alternative to Hunzinger's thesis was Steven E. Ozment, who in his study *Homo spiritualis* (1969) attempts to evaluate both Hunzinger's and Ebeling's positions.<sup>58</sup> Critical of both, he states as his intent as to argue that "what Luther initially places in suspension and gradually denies altogether in the neoplatonic world-view are the natural, soteriological resources with which it endows the soul of man. What he retains and theologically exploits from the neoplatonic world-view is the importance of the 'objective reference.'"<sup>59</sup> Ozment's first point of criticism against

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<sup>54</sup> Cranz 1959, 5-6; 19-21.

<sup>55</sup> Cranz 1959, 19.

<sup>56</sup> Ebeling 1951, 172-230. The article was first published in *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* vol. 48 (1951) and republished in *Lutherstudien*, band I (Ebeling 1971, 1-68).

<sup>57</sup> Ebeling 1951, 187-197. Ebeling's interpretation of Luther's ontology is examined more closely in chapter 2.3.3.2.

<sup>58</sup> As the subtitle of Ozment's work states (*Homo spiritualis. A comparative study of the anthropology of Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson and Martin Luther (1509-16) in the context of their theological thought*), his study is constructed as a survey comparing Luther's anthropology to that of Johannes Tauler and Jean Gerson. The treatment of Hunzinger's thesis is found in Ozment 1969, 87-138.

<sup>59</sup> Ozment 1969, 89.



the Neo-Platonic thesis concerns the nature of the good. Although he admits that Luther speaks about the unitive nature of spiritual good things over against the *temporalia*, according to Ozment's interpretation the good in spiritual things consists for Luther in that they create concord and friendship, and in that way they stand in contrast to "the realities of sixteenth century daily life". Luther's theology thus expresses "a combination of rare teutonic common sense and a theological understanding of the *alibi* and *contraria* character of the *bona fidei*". Thus Ozment argues that the presuppositions for Luther's dualism are not ontological, but rather found in Luther's theological definition of substance.<sup>60</sup>

Moreover, even though Ozment finds material in Luther's anthropology to support a strict division between the body and the soul, Ozment's identification of the "old man" with the "whole man" and the "flesh" with the "body" make it impossible for him to meaningfully discuss the relationship of the natural and qualitative anthropological descriptions in Luther, and prevent him from bringing the anthropological discussion to its conclusion.<sup>61</sup> Rather, Ozment's second point of criticism against Hunzinger's thesis involves Ozment's reading of the word "soul" (*anima*). By adducing a scholion in which Luther expresses the common late medieval notion that the soul is present in every member of the body, Ozment seeks to disprove the existence of a distinction between the spiritual and the corporeal in Luther's thought. Further adding to the confusion, he defines the terms *mens*, *spiritus*, *cor* and *conscientia* as parallel to if not synonymous with *anima*, thus rejecting the common interpretation of *spiritus* as referring in Luther's texts to the divine-human principle in which the two dimensions are intertwined. The latter view, according to Ozment, contradicts the "down-to-earth anthropological meaning of this concept for Luther".<sup>62</sup> And while Ozment agrees that Luther's texts confer multiple dignifying titles and attributes on the soul, he nevertheless states that the celestial nature attributed to the soul by Luther concerns its imperative to seek heavenly goods, not its ontological status. This dignity is rather dependent on the promise of God to dwell in the soul. According to Ozment it requires an historical context, and is acquired through faith in God. Furthermore, because the enemies of God (sins, miseries and evils) can also dwell in the soul, we do not find in Luther "a clear picture of human life as a 'double life,' divided into two parts, one naturally limited to the sensible world, the other naturally oriented to an intelligible order." Rather "[w]e find a much more complex picture, lacking the terminological precision and consistency ... a picture of a man who is operationally united (*totus homo velut unum membrum*)". According to Ozment Luther therefore is not primarily concerned about the nature of the soul, but rather about the life of the whole man in subjection to the powers of sin and God's promises and faith in Christ. The diverse theological terms Luther uses merely provide an anthropological 'shorthand', which Luther can flexibly employ to speak about the life of faith.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Ozment 1969, 90-91.

<sup>61</sup> Ozment 1969, 91-92. On the necessity of these distinctions for making any sense of Luther's anthropology, see chapter 2.4.

<sup>62</sup> Ozment 1969, 93-95.

<sup>63</sup> Ozment 1969, 95-101. When one considers the scope of Luther's undertaking anthropological questions and distinctions in his works between 1513-1521 (see chapter 2.4) Ozment's conclusion almost appears ridiculous in its simplification of the issues involved.

After having criticised Hunzinger's Neoplatonic thesis, Ozment moves on to evaluate the existentialist thesis. While rejecting the idea that the interior and exterior man denote parts of the human being, and rather interpreting them as the whole man and his way of life, Ozment nevertheless concludes that for Luther this relationality requires an objective point of reference. Ozment argues that the dimension of 'turning' does exist in Luther, but that it concerns 'objective contexts' instead of merely one's way of relating to God. Ozment suggests that they are two opposite 'places' to which and in which the heart of man directs and locates its hope and fear, and from which it receives its joy and suffering. They are places which can carry the *extra nos* and *pro nobis* dimensions as well as speak meaningfully of the remembered past and promised future works of God.<sup>64</sup> Ozment then goes on to combine this argument with his interpretation of Luther's concept of substance. According to Ozment *substantia* (which constitutes a Christian for Luther) is a place on which the Christian can stand with all his powers in the face of death. This substance is an objective place *extra nos*, constituted outside of one's own existence. Ozment thus agrees with Ebeling that for Luther substance has an existential definition, but remarks that, seen soteriologically, this existence has specific and indispensable *termini* (and is not thus only constituted by one's turning). It 'remembers' the past works of God and 'hopes' in the future works of God.<sup>65</sup>

With regard to anthropology, Ozment defines memory (*memoria*) as the capacity with which the soul is fixed upon those objective places and which substantiates one's life in the present.<sup>66</sup> Contradicting his earlier arguments against Hunzinger, according to which the anthropological terms used by Luther are only 'shorthands', Ozment accepts the fact that Luther, when discussing the powers of the soul, uses the concepts of *intellectus* and *affectus* much more often than other terms. Moreover, Ozment defines both concepts by their objects: As the intellect is for Luther the ability to understand spiritual things, Ozment takes that its objects are "events constituting salvation, 'soteriological' rather than 'epistemological'." He states that they are not visible or apparent, but rather things spoken about in the word of God. Regarding the relationship of the intellect and affect, Ozment's interpretation is that both go hand-in-hand. The intellect as capacity is defined by its object, and the quality of the person is defined by the thing loved, both grounded on an objective soteriological context.<sup>67</sup> Thus Ozment contrasts the earthly life, which lacks substance capable of supporting man, and is therefore soteriologically de-substantial, with the life of faith, which fastens the person upon the works of God. But because Ozment interpretes faith and hope as having as their object future things that are not yet present, the faithful still live in the tribulation between "not having" and "having". The place where the faithful live is not yet present *in re*, only *in fide* and *spe*. Nevertheless, according to Ozment this journeying to a definite destination is in a certain sense a 'substantiating' form of arrival.<sup>68</sup>

Ozment's reading bases the difference between spiritual and carnal sense of Luther's biblical interpretation solely on the objective viewpoint, not on any special cognitive

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<sup>64</sup> Ozment 1969, 101-104.

<sup>65</sup> Ozment 1969, 105-109.

<sup>66</sup> Ozment 1969, 110-111.

<sup>67</sup> Ozment 1969, 111-117.

<sup>68</sup> Ozment 1969, 118-121.

capacity of the believer, which would be the key to understanding the spiritual sense. This reading runs into serious trouble, however, when he discusses the relation of the Law and Gospel. Especially problematic for Ozment is the relationship between the Law understood literally and the Law understood spiritually, the latter according to Luther being identical with the Gospel. Ozment argues that the old law spiritually understood is not identical with the Gospel nor is an 'object' empowering a spiritual understanding, but that they rather converge or "come together as friends". Ozment seeks to establish this view by an understanding of the law as a testimony to the Gospel, which viewed from the side of the Gospel is not the old law, but orients the believer to the testimonies of God. Emphasizing the historical and objective sense of these testimonies Ozment puts the relationship between these two into an historical-soteriological context. The people of the old law believe in God's promises concerning the coming of Christ in the flesh, the people of the Gospel in the promises concerning the coming of Christ in glory. What is common for both is that they live believing in future things promised by God. Ozment concludes: "behind and before both people stand the *opera Dei*. Remembering what is past and hoping for what is still to come, both people live in a 'soteriological vacuum.' Anthropological resources cannot 'fill' it; if they could there would be no reason to remember what is past and to hope for what is still to come." Ozment, however, agrees that this vacuum is filled through faith which recognizes the face of Christ in the *adventus spiritualis*. It is faith that offers the substantial place or *substaculum vitae*, a ground on which the faithful can stand on and not fall into the abyss. This existential subsistence in the present is made possible by the objective historical-soteriological context of faith. This approach is indicative of Ozment's desire not to treat the concept of faith from an anthropological perspective.<sup>69</sup>

Ozment finishes his lengthy review by concluding, that there is some evidence suggesting Neoplatonic influence, but that it is too weak. He views the existential thesis as more fruitful, but lacking. As a corrective he offers his own effort to construct an 'objective context'. Ozment further posits that should a defensible clarification of Luther's worldview be made manifest, the following motifs should be taken into account: "the concern for the unity of the soul and the predilection of speaking of man *coram Deo* in terms of the active correlation of *intellectus* and *affectus*; the soteriologically de-substantial character of this life; the 'substantiating' power of *fides* and *spes*; and a centrality of a comprehensive objective framework."<sup>70</sup> In a more general sense, however, Ozment declares that a major weakness of both the Neoplatonic and existentialist theses is their assumption that Luther's concern is to distinguish and oppose irreconcilable 'entities'. According to Ozment, Luther is primarily concerned with the opposite: to reconcile them, as in his concept of the *simul*. However, Ozment bases his interpretation on the few passages of the *Dictata* in which Luther uses the analogy to a movement to explain his concept of the *simul*.<sup>71</sup> Ozment therefore interprets this simultaneity as being in the middle of opposites but not acquiring them, and this explicitly in an exclusive sense. Ozment rejects a Christological interpretation where the *simul* is conceived of through the concept of *communicatio idiomatum*, as participation in both of the opposites (in the case

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<sup>69</sup> Ozment 1969, 121-130.

<sup>70</sup> Ozment 1969, 131.

<sup>71</sup> See chapters 2.4.1.3 and 2.4.2.3.

of Christ, humanity and divinity).<sup>72</sup> In accordance with this interpretation, Ozment stresses that the Christian cannot be “partly righteous and partly sinful”. He states: “The present life of the *fideles* ... must be sinful and righteous in such a way that (1) the radical opposition between righteousness of God and the sinfulness of man, (2) the distinction between divine and human nature and activity, and (3) the miraculous reality of God’s presence to man in faith and hope, are clearly preserved and set forth.” Thus Ozment stresses at the same time the radical difference between realities opposed to each other, and Luther’s reconciled dualism, in which these opposites coexist simultaneously. However, this coexistence is understood through his idea of objective contexts of reference, which are not acquired or participated in, only believed in and hoped for.<sup>73</sup>

The question of Luther’s relationship to Platonism and his way of understanding the nature of the invisible world is also treated by William Wright, who in his recent work *Martin Luther’s Understanding of God’s Two Kingdoms* (2010) explores Renaissance Neoplatonism in detail.<sup>74</sup> In my opinion Wright is successful in demonstrating that Luther’s theology is not related to the semi-pagan Platonism represented by some of the humanist writers of the Renaissance. However, Wright does not distinguish between the pagan Renaissance Neoplatonism and the Christian Platonism represented by e.g. Augustine and Bonaventure. Moreover, Wright selectively quotes Cranz in rejecting Luther’s Platonism in the *Dictata*, while Cranz actually explicitly agrees that the form of Luther’s thought in *Dictata* and the early writings may be described with qualifications as Platonist.<sup>75</sup> The problem here lies partially in the definition of Platonism. Wright regards the idea of an ontological hierarchy and concept of the One as necessary components of Platonism, and does not consider e.g. the theology of Augustine as Platonist. For Wright, the spiritual nature of the Church has absolutely nothing to do with the Platonic intellectual world.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, his description of the actual nature of the kingdom of God as spiritual and invisible is in general in agreement with the portrayal given in this dissertation, but the present study analyses more precisely the nature of Luther’s ontology and epistemology. Thus it remains unclear, what Wright thinks the spiritual and unseen things, that, though only understood by faith, nevertheless “really existed” and laid the foundation for Luther’s two-kingdom view, are in their ontological nature.<sup>77</sup> The merit of Wright’s study thus lies in its demarcation between Luther and Renaissance Platonism, but its analysis of the actual content of Luther’s theology remains imprecise.

The above survey highlights certain major points through which the views of Hunzinger, Cranz, Ebeling, Ozment and Wright can be compared. The major contribution of Hunzinger lies in showing the difference between the two worlds (the visible and the invisible) in Luther’s Psalm Commentary. Hunzinger’s thesis, however, is lacking in that these two are not brought together or reconciled (and in this way the Ozment’s criticism of Hunzinger appears justified). Moreover, Hunzinger does not attempt to locate Luther’s

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<sup>72</sup> On the way in which Luther (contrary to Ozment’s claim) actually utilizes this Christological analogy in his concept of the *simul* see chapter 2.4.2.3

<sup>73</sup> Ozment 1969, 130-138. On Ozment’s rejection of the Christological understanding of the *simul*, see Ozment 1969, 138 footnote 1.

<sup>74</sup> See Wright 2010, 71-77; 90-94.

<sup>75</sup> Wright 2010, 101-106. See also Wright 2010, 102 and Cranz 1959, 2-3.

<sup>76</sup> Wright 2010, 13-14; 103-105, 110.

<sup>77</sup> Wright 2010, 115-118.

Platonism more precisely within the history of ideas. Cranz notices the Platonist tendencies in Luther's thought, but also the development within Luther's early works towards a more paradoxical concept of hiddenness under contraries. He raises question about the actual sources of Luther's thought. For his part Ebeling offers a very subjectivist reading, locating the difference between the two worlds absolutely in the person of the believer, i.e., in his existential way of relating to the world. According to his interpretation there exist no objective points of reference on which these two are grounded. Ozment, although seemingly offering an objective alternative to Ebeling, still presents a non-realist, metaphorical reading of Luther's texts regarding the opposition between the two worlds. Nevertheless, one can compliment Ozment for expressing the question of how these two worlds are brought together in Luther's thought. Wright is successful in showing that Luther's theology is not Platonist in the humanistic sense. However, he does not offer any precise alternative concerning how the nature of the spiritual and invisible things that exist really and not only as an orientation of the person should be understood. In my opinion, it seems that the realist starting point offered by Hunzinger, Cranz, Ozment and Wright needs to be taken seriously. The century-old position of Hunzinger is still valuable in the sense that it alone offers a developed ontological interpretation of how Luther's text regarding the relations of the visible and invisible things is to be understood. Ozment's remarks regarding the need also to reconcile and not only distinguish the opposites, however, shows the corrective which the view of Hunzinger requires. This corrective is implicitly offered by Cranz, who emphasized the development towards a more paradoxical hiddenness in Luther's thought. The visible and invisible things do not remain irreconcilable ontological opposites, but are brought together in the doctrine about God's presence under contraries. This principle, however, is not in conflict with Platonism, but rather in accord with some Platonist theologies which emphasize the coincidence of opposites in the divinity, as hinted already by Cranz.

The question cannot therefore be reduced to whether Luther's thought is simply "Platonist", but rather one also needs to ask (as Wright does) what is meant by that Platonism. In their definition of Platonism Hunzinger and Cranz emphasize dualism and contrast between visible and invisible, Ebeling focuses on the concept of the subject as well as on the temporal perspective, Ozment on the question whether the soul is naturally endowed with soteriological faculties for grasping the invisible, and Wright on ontological hierarchy and the concept of the One. No single definition is therefore utilized by these scholars. Each approaches Platonism by means of different features. This problem, however, is in no way limited to the Platonism debate within Luther research, but it also concerns the definition of the relationship of Christian thought and Platonism in general.<sup>78</sup> No Christian author can be considered purely Platonist *per se* – unless, like some of the Fathers, one wishes to count Plato himself as a Christian author. Therefore, to pose the question about Luther's Platonism is to ask whether Luther can be seen in continuity with and as part of the tradition of Christian Platonism, that is, a Christian theology which utilizes ideas and concepts from the Platonist tradition. Used in this way the Platonism of a particular Christian author is not be defined by means of a fixed set of criteria, but rather through the extent of his utilization of concepts and ideas of the Platonic tradition. As

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<sup>78</sup> See e.g. Sheldon-Williams 1967, 425-426; Louth 1983, xii-xiv; Ayres 2010, 18-19. On definition of historical Neoplatonism see Moore 2005

stated in the introductory chapter, the reference point of this study is the Western theological tradition of Augustinianism, stemming from Augustine's appropriation of Platonism, through the Victorines, who integrated Dionysian elements into that framework, to Bonaventure's metaphysics of light and his realist epistemology of illumination. In short, the theologians representing this way of thought can be referred to as the Augustinian School, although one can raise the critical question of whether one can speak about such schools as one block.<sup>79</sup> In the next chapters Luther's views on the nature of God (chapter 2.2) , the universe (chapter 2.3) and the human being (chapter 2.4) are examined with this reference point in mind.

## 2.2. God

### 2.2.1. God as the Eternally Moving and Resting Trinity

The aim of this chapter is to investigate Luther's understanding of God, both in general, as well as specifically with regard to how Luther understands the divine nature. In Christian theology it is common to distinguish between the nature (*ousia*) of God and the divine persons (*hypostateis*), and also between God as in his nature (theology) and God as he acts in relation to the creation (economy). Furthermore, the term "nature" can be understood in a strict metaphysical sense as denoting substance, or in a more loose sense as meaning the general quality, character and habits of action of something. It is this more general meaning which is the primary sense of this chapter, but also the more strict meanings of the term will be touched upon insofar as something can be said about them. Therefore, the general purpose of this chapter is to shed some light on what Luther sees as the essential and defining (in the looser sense) characteristics of God, both in himself and his immediate action towards the created world. It is, however, not the objective of this chapter to provide a comprehensive picture of Luther's view of the nature of God. Rather, the treatment will concentrate on such aspects of Luther's doctrine concerning the Godhead and the Trinity which are significant for Luther's understanding of faith as its preconditions.

Luther's understanding of the nature, being or essence of God is a very difficult subject to research. Despite the immense amount of text contained in the *Dictata super Psalterium* (13-15), *Lectures on Romans* (1515-16), *Galatians* (1516), *Hebrews* (1517-18) and *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519-21), one is usually forced to work with only a handful of quotations on each subtopic, as the questions related to the understanding of reality and the nature of God are not Luther's main focus. Rather, they form preconditions of his thought, topics which are explicitly discussed only sporadically. Nevertheless, when one brings all the material together, a more precise picture does emerge.

Perhaps one of the most subtle texts of Luther is his Christmas sermon of 1514 in which Luther discusses Christ as the Eternal Word of the Father with an emphasis on Trinitarian theology understood through an Aristotelian background. Tuomo Mannermaa

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<sup>79</sup> See p. 18, especially footnote 33.

examines this sermon prominently in his article on the Trinitarian nature of Luther's ontology.<sup>80</sup> In this sermon Luther (among other things) examines the distinction, coeternity and divinity of the persons of Father and Son and the nature of the internal and external word, both in God and in human beings.<sup>81</sup> In the last part of the sermon, Luther discusses general ontology with respect to different categories of created beings (inanimate, animal, sensual, rational, intellectual) and the nature of movement in the universe. Through this meditation, Luther arrives at the conclusion that natural movement reflects the movement of Father in producing Christ, the Word.<sup>82</sup> He continues to discuss how it is common to all created things to move in a manner proper to their nature, and how in all movement the mover in a certain sense stays within itself while extending outside of itself.<sup>83</sup> Luther quotes Aristotle, saying: "movement is the essence itself of God according to Aristotle"<sup>84</sup>. Based on the movement found in different creatures he then summarizes:

Of all these the identity of the movement with the one that moves is easily understood, because all of these are a certain kind of movement, as it is said. Therefore also the Son of God is the essence of God itself and the divine essence is the Word itself, only in him in by an ineffable and superintelligible movement descending from him.<sup>85</sup>

Luther further says that God, when he acts, "moves by an intelligible, no indeed by a superintelligible movement; remains the same and nevertheless multiplies himself"<sup>86</sup>. Luther does make a limiting statement, where he states (in accordance with orthodoxy) that "God does not multiply himself through his being (*esse*), but he multiplies himself through his giving birth (*per producere suum*). This is, that the essence does not give birth nor is born."<sup>87</sup> This remark establishes a distinction between divine nature as denoting the 'substantial' divinity in the classical sense shared by the three persons (which does not give birth), and the divine nature as the Trinity that includes the relations between the persons.<sup>88</sup> The divinity of the three persons includes in itself that which moves (Father),

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<sup>80</sup> See *Hat Luther eine trinitarische Ontologie?* Mannermaa 1994. The article is summarized on p. 14 of the present study. This sermon is also analysed by Peura 1994, 86-101 and Dieter 2001, 260-269; 346-377.

<sup>81</sup> WA 1, 20-25.

<sup>82</sup> WA 1, 25, 39 – 27, 4.

<sup>83</sup> WA 1, 26, 9 – 28, 24.

<sup>84</sup> WA 1, 27, 22-23. "Sicut autem motus est ipsa essentia Dei secundum Aristotelem". However note also the sentence's continuation at WA 1, 27, 23-24: "qui dicit, quod sit actus [24] mobilis in quantum huiusmodi" ("who says, that movement is the actuality [*actus*] of the mobile insofar it is mobile"). According to Slenczka the intention of Luther's quote is only to illustrate a certain aspect of the doctrine of Trinity, namely the *processio* of the Son from the Father, but not to build a general ontology in which movement and being are united. See Slenczka 1994, 61-65.

<sup>85</sup> WA 1, 27, 35-39: "Quae omnia ex [36] identitate motus cum mobili facile intelliguntur, quia omnia illa quidam [37] motus sunt, ut dictum est. Ita ergo et Filius Dei est ipsa essentia Dei, et [38] esse divinum est ipsum verbum, solo scilicet illo ineffabili et superintelligibili [39] motu ab eo descendens."

<sup>86</sup> WA 1, 27, 9-12: "Ita ineffabiliter [10] Deus, dum se intelligit, dicit, sapit, sentit, profundit et agit ac [11] intelligibili, imo superintelligibili quodam motu movet, manet idem et tamen [12] seipsum multiplicat."

<sup>87</sup> WA 28, 3-4: "ita Deus non per esse, sed per producere suum sese multiplicat. [4] Hoc est, quod essentia nec generat nec generatur."

<sup>88</sup> In modern systematic theology a gap is often seen between a classical Greek understanding of substance (*ousia*) in the doctrine of the Trinity, in which the divine nature as a substance is given attributes not related to the relationship of the persons as Trinity, and modern Trinitarian thought, where nothing else

movement (Son) and rest (Holy Spirit).<sup>89</sup> “So it happens in the divine, where God always moves and rests. [...] This movement there is eternal, as also the rest is eternal.”<sup>90</sup>

In the last part of the sermon Luther discusses what can be called an ontology of participation.<sup>91</sup> According to Luther, when the Word became flesh, God did not “leave himself”, i.e., the divinity, but he assumed flesh in the sense, that he not only “has flesh”, but that he “is flesh”. The reason for the Word becoming flesh and God becoming man was that the flesh could become Word and the human being could become God. Respectively then, in his or her union with the Word through faith a human being does not lose his or her humanity. He or she is not transformed substantially into the Word, but he assumes and unites himself with the Word in the sense that he or she can be said to be the Word.<sup>92</sup> One can see behind these formulations Luther’s ontology regarding the nature of movement.<sup>93</sup> However, the precondition for assuming the Word is that one in a certain sense has to leave all that is one’s own. Luther provides an Aristotelian analogy to this action: As the potencies of the creatures have to be passive in order to be receptive to their proper forms and in this process become in a certain way like the form and assume it, also the human being has to become like nothing at all in order to receive God as the object of beatitude.<sup>94</sup> Luther states: “Therefore for example God, the object of beatitude, is the

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but the relations of the persons are seen to constitute the divine nature. The former view can be described as substantial and the latter relational. Luther seems to combine both of these aspects in his sermon. Though Mannermaa fails to make note of the distinction between the two ways Luther uses the term *essentia* in the sermon (see also Slenczka 1994, 64) he nevertheless makes a comment related to it, according to which Luther’s ontology cannot be characterized as an essential ontology or ‘ontology of substance’ (“Substanzontologie”), because in it the relational and the essential (“seinshaft”) aspect are combined. Therefore *relatio* and *esse* are contained within each other in Luther’s ontology. This has implications for Luther’s conception of participation (Mannermaa 1994, 44-48).

<sup>89</sup> WA 1, 28, 4-19.

<sup>90</sup> WA 1, 28, 14-19: “Ita in divinis fit: ubi semper Deus movetur et quiescit [15] (parce, lector, verbis indignis tantae rei expressione), movendo filius, quiescendo [16] Spiritus Sanctus procedit. Quia Spiritus Sanctus finis est emanationis [17] Dei, imo dum semper ex Patre profluit motus, i. e. filius, semper ex utroque [18] provenit quies, in qua et mobile et motus finitur. Sed motus ille aeternus [19] est ibi, ita et quies aeterna.”

<sup>91</sup> For Mannermaa’s thorough analysis of this part of the sermon see Mannermaa 1994, 48-53.

<sup>92</sup> WA 1, 28, 25-41: “[25] Nunc ad mores veniendum est et discendum inprimis, quod sicut [26] verbum Dei caro factum est, ita certe oportet et quod caro fiat verbum. [27] Nam ideo verbum fit caro, ut caro fiat verbum. Ideo Deus fit homo, ut [28] homo fiat Deus. Ideo virtus fit infirma, ut infirmitas fiat virtuosa. Induit [29] formam et figuram nostram et imaginem et similitudinem, ut nos induat [30] imagine, forma, similitudine sua: ideo sapientia fit stulta, ut stultitia fiat [31] sapientia, et sic de omnibus aliis, quae sunt in Deo et nobis, in quibus [32] omnibus nostra assumit ut conferret nobis sua. Efficimur autem verbum [33] vel verbo similes, i. e. veraces, sicut ipse homo vel homini similis, i. e. [34] peccatori et mendaci, sed non peccator et mendax, sicut nos non Deus [35] efficimur nec veritas, sed divini et veraces vel divinae consortes naturae, [36] quando assumimus verbum et per fidem ei adhaeremus. Nam nec verbum [37] ita factum est caro, quod se deseruerit et in carnem mutatum sit, sed quod [38] assumit et sibi univit carnem, qua unione non tantum habere dicitur carnem, [39] sed etiam esse caro. Ita nec nos qui sumus caro sic efficimur verbum, quod [40] in verbum substantialiter mutemur, sed quod assumimus et per fidem ipsum [41] nobis unimus, qua unione non tantum habere verbum sed etiam esse dicimur.”

<sup>93</sup> Likewise Mannermaa 1994, 48.

<sup>94</sup> WA 1, 29, 6-30: “Oportet [7] autem, quando verbum assumimus, nos ipsos deserere et exinanire, nihil de [8] nostro sensu retinendo, sed totum abnegando, et sic sine dubio efficimur [9] illud, quod assumimus, et ita portat Dominus in hac vita omnes verbo [10] virtutis suae, nondum reipsa. Nulli enim credenti hic dantur quae credit, [11] sed verbum fides futurorum, et in hoc suspensi et captivi totum verbum [12] sumus, imo et in futuro portabit nos verbo, sed hoc erit verbum indivisibile [13] illud aut incarnatum, hoc sine voce, sono, literis erit. Interius illud autem [14] sono, voce, literis est involutum, sicut mel in favo, nucleus in testa,



essence itself of the blessed, without which the blessed would be nothing at all, but when they obtain that, it is like they become from potential to something.”<sup>95</sup> Luther stresses, however, that it is not yet that those who believe have achieved this, but that they are still in the process in which the word leads them on to its fulfillment.<sup>96</sup> Though Luther precisely deals here with only the nature of the believers’ and the blessed’s participation in the existence and essence of God, one can nevertheless surmise that in the light of Luther’s previously expressed conception about the nature of movement in the universe in general, one can also apply the described model (in certain measure) to all Creation. Thus one could postulate that all that exists exists to the extent that it participates to the existence of God.<sup>97</sup> This view will receive further confirmation in the following chapters.

Mannermaa also raises in his article the question of how much significance the thoughts expressed in the Christmas sermon have had for Luther’s later theology. However, Mannermaa’s emphasis is on whether Luther returns in his later writings to the Trinitarian structure of created reality (i.e., the movement in it), and whether the theme of faith as participation is continued in the later writings.<sup>98</sup> On the other hand, the focus here is on asking, whether Luther’s idea of the nature of God as eternal begetter in which existence, movement and rest are combined continues into his later writings, and what significance it has for Luther’s overall understanding of the nature of God. Though the texts found within the major sources of this study are scarce, they nevertheless corroborate this picture.

First, Luther also presents in his other writings (e.g., the *Operationes in Psalmos*) the same idea that Christ as the Son is eternally begotten of the Father in an eternal, constant and infinite movement.<sup>99</sup> In itself this is no wonder, since Luther here simply presents the

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medulla [15] in cortice, vita in carne et verbum in carne. Nec id mirum, quod nos [16] verbum fieri oportere dixi, cum et Philosophi dicant, quod intellectus sit [17] intelligibile per actualem intellectionem et sensus sensibile per actualem [18] sensationem, quanto magis id in spiritu et verbo verum est! Sic enim [19] Aristoteles ait: Intellectus impossibilis est nisi eorum, quae intelligit, sed [20] potentia est ipsa omnia, et ipse est quodammodo omnia. Sic etiam appetitus [21] et appetibile sunt unum, et amor et amatum, quae omnia substantialiter [22] intellecta falsissima sunt. Sed sic quia intellectus et affectus dum desiderant [23] sua Obiecta, in quantum sic desiderantes, habent se velut materia appetens [24] formam, et secundum hoc, i. e. in quantum desiderantes, non autem in [25] quantum subsistentes, sunt pura potentia, imo quoddam nihil et fiunt quoddam [26] ens, quando obiecta attingunt, et ita obiecta sunt eorum esse et actus, [27] sine quibus nihil essent, sicut materia sine forma nihil esset. Pulchra haec [28] Philosophia sed a paucis intellecta altissimae Theologiae utilis est. Sic v. g. [29] Deus Obiectum beatitudinis est ipsa essentia beatorum, sine qua beati nihil [30] essent omnino, sed dum attingunt ipsum fiunt velut ex potentia aliquid.”

<sup>95</sup> WA 1, 29, 28-30.

<sup>96</sup> WA 1, 29, 8-15. Luther seems to think that in this life the word which carries us is the promise, but the promise already contains as its kernel the eternal and indivisible Word, into which the faithful are assumed in the process.

<sup>97</sup> Luther’s understanding of participation raises the question, however: in what sense do the creatures exist as *themselves* and on what basis do they retain their own existence and individuality when they leave all of their own as the requirement for the participation in the Word in the beatitude? Though the Aristotelian potencies are empty of form with regard to their object, they also do have an existence of their own as the specific potencies.

<sup>98</sup> Mannermaa 1994, 53.

<sup>99</sup> E.g. in *Operationes in Psalmos*, AWA 2, 92, 1-6: “Et illud quam vigilanter et digne sancti patres interpretati sunt: *Hodie genui te*, id est, in aeternitate. Aeternitas est, quod genitus est, gignitur, gignetur sine fine, cui hoc est esse filium, quod nasci ex patre; nec nasci cepit nec desinet, sed semper nascitur praesentissima nativitate. Recte *hodie* genitus dicitur, id est, nascens semper. Nam hoc *hodie* non habet hesternum nec crastinum, sed semper diurnum, sicut Ioh 8<,58>: ‘Antequam am fieret, ego sum.’” See also AWA 2, 335, 5 – 338, 2; 448, 7-14.

orthodox, Augustinian understanding of the eternal birth of Christ. Second, the theme of assuming the Word as the Word assumed flesh, and relinquishing the form of human wisdom and assuming the form of the Word, is also encountered in the *Lecture on Romans*. There Luther emphasizes the idea of sharing in the properties of the Word, which has a bearing on the theology of justification.<sup>100</sup> However, as in the Christmas sermon, Luther stresses that this participation in the Word is not yet complete, and will only be complete in the future. Somewhat akin to the distinction between internal and external words in the Christmas sermon, Luther recounts in the *Dictata* three different ways of God's speech: in himself, for the blessed in glory; in spirit, for the saints in this life; and through the external word, for human ears. Only the "final word" in glory will provide ultimate satisfaction.<sup>101</sup>

Third, Luther is also in agreement with the 1514 sermon when he states in the *Dictata* that one who believes (and thus becomes a son of God) must constantly be born, renewed and begotten as is the Son of God. As in the sermon, the eternal birth of Christ remains no

<sup>100</sup> WA 56, 61, 15 – 62, 1: "[15] **Gratias autem** sc. agimus **deo** }Grec[us 'Gratia autem Deo' sc. sit [16] **quod fuistis serui peccati**: i. e. quod estis nunc, quales non fuistis, Sed [17] 'fuistis serui peccati' **obedistis autem** per credulitatem **ex corde** simpliciter [18] et sine fictione **in eam formam doctrine** }i. e. secundum regulam euangelii [1] **in qua traditi estis.**"

WA 56, 62, 13-18 (gloss 1): "GLOSSA:<sup>1)</sup> [13] I. e. de forma erroris estis traducti in formam euangelii, Quia [14] 'Ineternum, Domine, permanet verbum tuum'. Non enim verbum, Sed [15] nos mutamur et cedimus ei, Isaie 40.: 'fenum exiccatum est, verbum [16] autem Domini manet ineternum.' Matt. 7.: 'Esto consentiens aduersario [17] tuo', q. d. relinque formam tuam et Indue formam verbi. Quia [18] 'Verbum caro factum est', Vt nos verbum efficiamur."

WA 56, 227, 2-7: "Iustificat || Vincit || enim in [3] verbo suo, dum nos tales facit, quale est verbum suum, hoc est Iustum, [4] verum, Sapiens etc. Et ita nos in verbum suum, non autem verbum suum [5] in nos mutat. facit autem tales tunc, quando nos verbum suum tale [6] credimus esse, sc. Iustum, verum. Tunc enim Iam similis forma est in verbo [7] et in credente i. e. veritas et Iustitia"

WA 56, 329, 27 – 330, 5: "Quia Sapientia carnis aduersaria est verbo [28] Dei, Verbum autem Dei est immutabile et insuperabile. ideo necesse est [29] Sapientiam carnis mutari et suam formam relinquere ac formam verbi [30] suscipere. Quod fit, dum per fidem seipsam captiuat et destruit, conformat [1] se verbo, credens verbum esse verum, se vero falsam. Sic 'Verbum caro [2] factum est' et 'assumpsit formam serui', vt caro verbum fiat et homo [3] formam assumat verbi; tunc, vt c. 3. dictum est, homo fit Iustus, verax, [4] sapiens, bonus, mitis, castus, sicut est verbum ipsum, cui se per fidem [5] conformat."

<sup>101</sup> WA 55, II, 253, 370 – 254, 391: "[370] Sciendum Itaque, Quod verbum Dei triplici modo dicitur et reuelatur. Primo [371] a Deo patre in sanctis, in gloria et in seipso. Secundo in sanctis in hac [372] vita in spiritu. Tercio per verbum externum et linguam ad aures hominum. [373] BI 59 Et sic est velut in tertium vas \* transfusum. Et hoc est figuratum [374] per hoc, Quod olim 'Deus locutus est in prophetis et patribus', Et sic [375] mediante homine factum est velum literę et paries medius. Postea 'locutus [376] est in filio'; hoc adhuc est in velamento, Sed tamen secundum. Tandem [377] pater ipse in Cęlo loquetur nobis in seipso, cum nobis verbum suum [378] ipse sine vllo medio reuelabit, vt audiamus et videamus et beati simus. [379] Atque sicut prima locutio multis figuris et vmbris fuit Inuoluta, [380] que omnia in vno Christo implentur et Inueniuntur, Quia quicquid in lege [381] tam multis verbis et factis agitur, totum vnus Christus habet in veritate, [382] Sic enim 'verbum consummans et abbreviatum fecit Dominus', Vt que [383] ibi multis aguntur, hic vna fide scil. et Charitate expleantur et cesset [384] onerosa multitudo legum. Ita in futuro erit Deus idem vnusque omnia in [385] omnibus. Et tam multa, quibus nunc sub Christo etiam vtimur et egemus, [386] scil. gratiis et donis, que sunt per multa olim carnalia significata (Nunc [387] enim pauca sunt ceremonialia, immo nulla fere de necessitate Euangelii, [388] nisi 7 sacramenta, que olim erant plurima, Sed tamen spiritualiter ista remanent [389] et adhuc sunt multa), et tunc omnia ista pater vno nobis verbo [390] prestabit, Quia 'cum apparuerit gloria eius, tunc satiabimur', Et tamen [391] vnico et simplicissimo verbo suo satiabit nos."

The three ways of God's speech in the history of salvation follow the model: from multiplicity to simplicity, plurality to unity and material to immaterial, pointing to a possibly underlying Platonic idea. See chapter 2.3.

mere intratrinitarian characteristic, but becomes the model of the believers' existence and relationship to God, which is furthermore reflected in the entire created order:

If we namely are sons of God, we must always be in birth [*in generatione*]. Therefore it is said: 'He who is born of God does not sin', but the begetting of God [*generatio Dei*] preserves him. As in God, the Son is always from eternity born from the Father eternally, in the same manner also we must always be born, renewed and begotten. All change in the Creation signifies anagogically that birth, and this [birth, i.e., renewal] tropologically, and that of the Church allegorically. As in the Scripture it is said about us, that we are always like newborn children. [...] If we are compared to the flourishing of grass, we must not wither, but always flourish, always progress from virtue to virtue, from clarity to clarity, from faith to faith, that we would be those of whom it is said in Ps. 109: 'From the womb of the sunrise to you the dew of your infancy'.<sup>102</sup>

Luther also presents the same idea at the *Lecture on Galatians*. Here he emphasizes the life of the Christian as a crossing and passover in which a Christian is always made more and more like the Son of God:

Because of those who are not yet educated sufficiently in Christ, I repeat what I have frequently said before, that is, that the words 'redeems', 'we are adopted', 'you are sons', 'he sends the Spirit', 'not a slave but a son and inheritor' and similar are not to be understood as having been completed in us, but as that which Christ has fulfilled and which will be fulfilled in him and us. All of these have been begun so that they would be perfected more and more every day: therefore it is called passover and crossing of the Lord, and we are called Galileans, that is, migrators, because we constantly leave from Egypt through the desert, that is, through the way of the Cross and Passion, into the Promised Land; are redeemed and are constantly redeemed; have been adopted and are adopted; have been made sons of God and become such; the Spirit is sent, is being sent and will be sent; we know and we will know. Therefore do not think that a life of a Christian would be still and quiet. Rather, it is a crossing and progress from vices to virtue, from clarity to clarity, from virtue to virtue [...]<sup>103</sup>

<sup>102</sup> WA 55, II, 974, 2388 – 975, 2401: "Si enim filii Dei sumus, semper oportet esse [2389] in generatione. Vnde dicitur: 'Qui natus est ex Deo, non peccat', Sed generatio [2390] Dei conservat eum. Sicut enim in Deo filius semper et ab eterno et [2391] in eternum nascitur, Ita et nos semper oportet nasci, novari, generari. [2392] Illam enim generationem omnis mutatio Creature significat Anagogice, [2393] et hanc tropologice, et Ecclesie allegorice. Sic in scrip[tura dicitur de [2394] nobis, quod sumus infantes quasi modo geniti semper. Et Psal. 71.: 'florebunt [2395] sicut fenum terre'. Impii et carnales etiam comparantur feno, Sed [2396] arescenti; Nos florenti et non arenti, Illi arenti et non florenti. Sed florere [2397] non potest, nisi continue novum fiat et crescat. Ergo si florentia feni nobis [2398] comparatur, non oportet nos marcescere, Sed semper florere, Semper ire [2399] de virtute in virtutem, de claritate in claritatem, ex fide in fidem, Vt simus, [2400] de quibus dictum est Psal. 109.: 'Ex Matrice Aurore tibi ros infantie [2401] tue'"

<sup>103</sup> WA 2, 535, 26 – 536, 5: "[26] Propter eos, qui nondum satis in Christo sunt eruditi, repeto, quae [27] supra saepius dixi, hoc est, verba illa 'redimeret', 'adoptionem recipiemus', [28] 'estis filii', 'misit spiritum', 'non est servus sed filius et haeres' et similia non [29] sunt intelligenda, quod completa in nobis sint, sed quod Christus hoc explevit, [30] quo in nobis et ipsa explerentur. Sic enim omnia incepta sunt, ut [31] de die in diem sint magis ac magis perficienda: ideo et phase domini, id [32] est transitus, dicitur et nos Gallilei, id est migrantes,<sup>1</sup> vocamur, quod assidue [33] de Aegypto per desertum, id est per viam crucis et passionis, eximus ad [34] terram promissionis, redempti sumus et assidue redimimur, recipimus adoptionem [1] et adhuc recipimus, facti sumus filii dei et sumus et fiamus, missus [2] est spiritus, mittitur et mittetur,

Luther directly connects the progress named in the text with a Christian's existence as participation in God:

Thus also we are, move and live in God: we are on account of the Father who is the substance of divinity, we move by the image (*movemur imagine*) of the Son who is divinely and eternally born of the Father in a way as if a movement from movement, we live according to the Spirit in whom the Father and the Son rest and, in a way, live.<sup>104</sup>

Therefore it is clear that Luther's view of the birth and progress of a Christian as a Christian is closely connected to the way Luther understands the nature of the Trinity as the eternal generation of the Son from the Father. All progress in Christian life happens through participation in Christ as the Word that moves reality.<sup>105</sup>

Fourth, Luther's conception of the nature of God is of high importance for the way Luther conceives the rest of the blessed souls in eternity. According to the view Luther expresses in the *Lecture on Hebrews*, the final rest of the spiritual person is namely when a person is left by faith and external word in the essential act of God (*opus essenziale Dei*) and participates in the movement of the birth of the uncreated Word:

Internally [the spiritual person] rests, when he rests privatively, namely when he is left by faith and word in the essential act of God, which is the nativity itself of the uncreated Word, as it is said: 'This is eternal life, that they know you, the true God, and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ', i.e., the procession of the Son from the Father. And here is no internal disturbance, because this Seventh Day has no evening by which it could pass into another day.<sup>106</sup>

The views expressed by Luther in his other writings therefore confirm a continuity with the major points of the Christmas sermon of 1514. For Luther the whole existence of created reality reflects the model of the eternal birth of the Son from the Father. In this process, God is dynamic being and movement, who possesses eternal beginning, eternal movement and eternal rest within himself. The movement and life of all creatures is a reflection of this movement of the Trinity. Through faith, a Christian begins to participate in the movement of God in a manner which is ontologically more profound than which is participated in by his mere existence. In the temporal life this participation is growing, but remains imperfect. In the final beatitude the blessed will participate in the essential act of the Trinity, which is the birth of the Son from the Father. This act also contains within it its own rest in the unity of the Holy Spirit, which is the final rest of the blessed souls.

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cognoscimus et cognoscemus. [3] Et ita vitam Christiani ne imageris statum et quietem esse, sed transitum [4] et profectum de vitiis ad virtutem, de claritate in claritatem, de virtute [5] in virtutem"

<sup>104</sup> WA 2, 536, 28-31: "Ita et nos in deo sumus, movemur et vivimus: sumus propter patrem qui [29] substantia divinitatis est, movemur imagine filii qui ex patre nascitur divino [30] et aeterno velut motu motus, vivimus secundum spiritum in quo pater et [31] filius quiescunt et velut vivunt."

<sup>105</sup> So also Mannerman, who comments on the same text (Mannerman 1994, 60).

<sup>106</sup> WA 57, b159, 17-24.

## 2.2.2. God as the Highest Good and Giver

In his book *Two Kinds of Love* Tuomo Mannermaa introduces a fundamental distinction in Luther's thought between self-giving divine love and self-seeking human love. According to this distinction, it is characteristic for human love to always seek an object which is good and lovable. Divine love, on the other hand, is characterized by its creating its own object out of that which is empty and nothing, bestowing on it existence and goodness. The basis of the distinction is in God's nature itself: It is God's essence, or being, always to create something out of nothing.<sup>107</sup> Mannermaa quotes Luther's *Magnificat* in ascertaining, that

Just as God in the beginning of creation made the world out of nothing, whence He is called the Creator and the Almighty, so His manner of working continues unchanged. Even now and to the end of the world, all His works are such that out of that which is nothing, worthless, despised, wretched, and dead, He makes that which is something, precious, honorable, blessed, and living. On the other hand, whatever is something, precious, honorable, blessed, and living, He makes to be nothing, worthless, despised, wretched, and dying. In this manner no creature can work; no creature can produce anything out of nothing. Therefore His eyes look only into the depths, not to the heights; as it is said in Daniel 3:55 (Vulgate): "Thou sittest upon the cherubim and beholdest the depths".<sup>108</sup>

This distinction is then utilized by Mannermaa as the key to understanding Luther's theology. In the second and third chapters of his book Mannermaa describes a state of confrontation that exists between two types of theology based on two different kinds of love. The basis of the criticism (on which Mannermaa seems to agree with Luther) is the accusation that in Thomistic theology (based on Aristotelian philosophy) the types of human love (love seeking a good and lovable object) is applied to theology and taken as the model of the relationship between the human being and God.<sup>109</sup> In the third chapter of his book, Mannermaa describes the idea Luther expressed in the Heidelberg disputation (1518) of the conflict between a theology of glory and a theology of the cross. *Theology of glory*, according to Mannermaa, is characterized by its taking the invisible, infinite attributes of God as its starting point, and by that God is loved as the "most real being" and the "highest good".<sup>110</sup> In contrast to this, in a *theology of the cross*, God is seen through suffering and the cross, which Mannermaa takes to mean both the suffering and cross of Christ and that of the individual Christian. According to Mannermaa, in contrast to the theology of glory God thus appears and is knowable to human beings only hidden in opposites (of his divine nature), as "negative essence and being".<sup>111</sup> Though Mannermaa readily admits that for Luther God in himself is also good, righteous, true and omnipotent, Mannermaa nevertheless sharply criticizes any theology in which the concept of desire

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<sup>107</sup> Mannermaa 2010, 1-5.

<sup>108</sup> WA 7, 547, 1-10. Translation here is from LW 21, 299, as the quote is taken from Mannermaa's book.

<sup>109</sup> Mannermaa 2010, 9-25. In this chapter in particular it is difficult to distinguish when Mannermaa is merely describing the background of Luther's criticism and when he himself joins in the critique of Thomism.

<sup>110</sup> Mannermaa 2010, 27-30.

<sup>111</sup> Mannermaa 2010, 31-38; Luther uses the term "negative essence" at WA 56, 392, 33 – 393, 3.

towards God as the highest good plays any meaningful role. According to Mannermaa, a theology based on the idea of God as the supreme good and highest object of love inevitably tends to have a more or less negative attitude towards the world. As an example of this, in the fourth chapter of his book Mannermaa discusses the theology of Thomas à Kempis. There he attempts to demonstrate, that human beings' appetitive love for God and their (expected) abandonment of the precious things of the creation belong inseparably together.<sup>112</sup> According to Mannermaa, on the other hand Luther's view of God as Giver allows one to see the creation as a good gift of God and so appreciate its value.<sup>113</sup>

Keeping in mind Mannermaa's criticism it is not difficult to understand why the concept of God as the highest good (*summum bonum*) traditionally has been viewed with great suspicion in Lutheran theology. Granted, the divine attributes have been ascribed to the Godhead in principle, but the use of such a metaphysical concept to explain more comprehensive principles of Luther's theology has not been widespread. The concept of God as Giver, on the other hand, has offered a less metaphysical and more relational concept with which to approach the question of the essence of God. Therefore it may be surprising to discover that the concept of God as *summum bonum* actually carries considerable weight in Luther's understanding of the nature of God. Unlike one might surmise from Mannermaa's exposition in his *Two Kinds of Love*, the concepts of God as the highest good and as Giver are actually for Luther not at all mutually exclusive, but rather complimentary.

Luther explicitly calls God the highest good at least three times in his first psalm lectures, the *Dicatat super Psalterium* (1513-1515). He begins by pointing out that God (even when he is angry with the creatures) remains in himself most quiet, tranquil and undisturbed. Because he is God, his immediate action is nothing else than the highest joy and delight. When God punishes creatures, it happens by taking away his presence and using other creatures to inflict punishment.<sup>114</sup> In the glosses on Ps. 44 he calls Christ the highest good, connecting the concept to the eternal procession of the Word from the Father.<sup>115</sup> Later he again employs the concept of Christ, stating that he is "lovable over everything".<sup>116</sup> In yet another text Luther describes God as more than loveable (*superamabilis*).<sup>117</sup> Moreover, in the *Dictata* Luther also names Christ, or union with him

<sup>112</sup> Mannermaa 2010, 45-50.

<sup>113</sup> Mannermaa 2010, 51-55.

<sup>114</sup> WA 55, II, 45, 12 – 46, 2. "Non enim ira sic est sua, quia in ipso sit, Sed quia creatura, in qua est ira, est eius, et ipsius nutu et imperio affligit impios, ipse autem in se manens quietissimus et tranquillus, immo summe bonus et non turbatus. Nam tam est bonus Deus, ut quicquid ipse immediate agit, non sit nisi summum gaudium et delectatio, et non affligit, Sed magis reficit. Sed in Impiis ipse se subtrahens et in summa manens bonitate applicat creaturas, quarum una alteram affligit, Sicut fit, cum ignis ligna comburit. Corollarium: Non Deus proprie affligit approximando, Sed recedendo et in creaturas relinquendo."

<sup>115</sup> WA 55, I, 366, 7-8: "**ERuctauit** produxit ab eterno **cor meum** ex se solo sine matre **verbum** filium equalem **bonum** summum."

<sup>116</sup> WA 55, I, 806, 21-24: "**Custodiuit anima mea** non tantum manus extra, Sed et intus cor meum **testimonia tua** promissiones de Christo et gratia eius: **et dilexit ea vehementer** quia summum bonum, scil. Christum, promittunt, quod est super omnia diligibile".

<sup>117</sup> WA 55, I, 137, 1 – 18. "**Et Ascendit super Cherubin**. Deus 'Ascendit' [3] non in natura, Sed in nostra cognitione et amore, quando cognoscitur [4] esse altissimus et incomprehensibilis et superamabilis. Et sic quanto magis [5] proficimus in cognitione eius, tanto magis 'ascendit', quia semper clarius [6] ac clarius cognoscitur eius altitudo. Sed hoc 'ascendere' non contingit, [7] nisi ubi prius 'descenderit', Sicut Christus prius descendit et postea [8] ascendit. Quia 'nemo ascendit in celum, nisi qui descendit', i. e. nemo [9]

whom the Church intimately knows, as the maximum good (*maximum bonum*).<sup>118</sup> And yet in one place Luther adds that God himself is the good and whole beatitude of the holy, not the gifts he gives. In addition in this same place Luther connects the giving of this good with participating in Christ.<sup>119</sup> Luther also mentions the concept of the *summum bonum* in the *Lecture on Romans* (1515-1516) and in the *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519-1521). In the former, he states that original sin leads the human being to consider something else than God as the highest good.<sup>120</sup> In the latter, he equates the highest good with the word of God (*verbum dei*), which has prompted the commentator of the AWA edition to claim that Luther's identification of the word as the highest good, instead of God, marks his separation from Scholasticism.<sup>121</sup> However Luther's description of the word as "good, sweet, pure, holy and miraculous" as well as his comments on the notion that one is united with this word through love, whereby one is "elevated over all creation", seriously calls into question whether this word can in any way be interpreted as anything other than *the Word*, Christ himself.<sup>122</sup>

For Luther, the goodness of God therefore seems to be an inseparable property of the divine nature, as the above five direct and three indirect references to God as the highest good demonstrate. They can be understood even more precisely when we consider them in association with other things Luther has to say about the nature of God, the nature of the good and the nature of love. According to what Luther says both in the *Dictata* (citing Augustine) and in the *Operationes*, through love one becomes like the object of one's

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peruenit ad diuinitatis cognitionem, nisi qui prius humiliatus fuerit [10] et in sui cognitionem descenderit, simul enim ibi et Dei cognitionem [11] inuenit. Vnde 'Cherubim' significat hic cognituias potentias, [12] super qua omnes 'ascendit' Deus in humilibus. **Penne** [13] **ventorum** autem significat proprie affectuias virtutes. Et sic 'volat'. [14] Vnde super eas non dicitur 'ascendere', Sed 'volare', quia tantum manet [15] amabilis, quantum cognoscitur. Non enim altius 'volat', i. e. amatur, [16] quam 'ascendit', i. e. cognoscitur. Igitur 'volatus' eius est ipsum esse [17] obiectum Dilectionis, 'Ascensus' autem eius est ipsum esse obiectum [18] cognitionis."

<sup>118</sup> WA 55, II, 243, 89-93: "**Eructauit cor** [90] **meum verbum bonum**, i. e. Nuncium bonum et prophetiam bonam de [91] maximo illo bono, scil. Christo et ecclesia. Quia iste est sermo Domini bonus [92] super genus humanum. 'Eructauit' autem dicit, i. e. de plenitudine interiori [93] et ex corde intimo affectuosoque animo significauit vobis."

<sup>119</sup> WA 55, II, 284, 111-120: "[111] 53, 8 **Confitebor nomini tuo, quoniam bonum est**. Non ait: quoniam [112] bonum dat, Sed propter esse bonum, non propter dare bonum, q. d. propter [113] seipsum, non propter lucrum. Nam 'Domini nomen bonum est in conspectu [114] sanctorum suorum', Psal[mo] precedenti 51. Hoc est: Nomen Domini [115] non dat sanctis bonum aliud quam est ipsummet, Sed ipsummet est bonum [116] eorum. Et sic dat seipsum, et ita non dat Sed est bonum et tota beatitudo [117] sanctorum. Nam sicut dicitur: 'Deus dat sanctis seipsum', quod valet: [118] 'Deus est bonum sanctorum suorum', Ita etiam Nomen eius dat seipsum illis, [119] i. e. est bonum eorum. Est autem nomen Dei ipse Christus filius Dei, [120] verbum quo se dicit, et nomen, quo se nominat, ipsum in eternitate."

<sup>120</sup> WA 56, 76, 24-27 gloss 1: "GLOSSA:<sup>1</sup> [24]Vnde propheta: 'Oculus meus deperdatus est animam meam' (i. e. [25] sapientia carnis). Denique Iob 3. Maledixit hunc diem sapientie, Quia [26]Deo contraria est et facit bonum apparere aliud quam summum illud, [27]quod Deus est, et frui eo, quod est creatura."

<sup>121</sup> AWA 2, 44, footnote 41: "Indem L das Wort als 'summum bonum' bezeichnet, wird der Unterschied zur Scholastik deutlich, für die Gott in philosophischer Definition das 'summum bonum' ist ..."

<sup>122</sup> AWA 2, 43, 21 – 44, 3: "Dicit ergo: *Beato huic viro erit voluntas sua in lege domini*; prorsus nihil videbit, amabit, odiet bonorum malorumve, sed hac voluntate prorsus super omnia creata eleuabitur. Quid igitur mirum, si beatus sit, qui caelesti hac voluntate praeditus nihil eorum sapit, in quibus colliduntur stulti beatitudinis aestimatores? Tum quia per hanc voluntatem iam unum cum verbo dei factus (siquidem amor unit amantem et amatum), necesse est, ut gustet, quam bonum, suauem, purum, sanctum, mirabile sit verbum dei, summum scilicet bonum, quod illi gustare non possunt, qui vel manu vel lingua tantum sunt in lege, voluntate autem in sordibus rerum mersi."

love; one is united with the object. If the object of love is empty (*vanus*) and transitory, one becomes empty and transitory. If the object of love is God, one becomes in a certain way like God.<sup>123</sup> This does not, however, mean that love assumes the primary place in the order of salvation, because Luther also writes that God can be loved only to the degree he is known.<sup>124</sup> This knowledge comes from faith, as the present study will demonstrate. But when one by faith possesses Christ as the highest good and begins to love God, one's soul is consequently filled with the amplex (*largitas*) of divinity.<sup>125</sup> The way Luther understands the nature of this amplex and goodness of divine nature has a profound significance for understanding the place of the distinction of the two kinds of love in Luther's theology.

Luther seems to subscribe to the Platonic principle of the good: *bonum est diffusivum sui* (good is self-diffusing; it is in the nature of the good to spread itself).<sup>126</sup> According to Luther, God is "infinite goodness, who can never be exhausted".<sup>127</sup> As such, God is the source and fountain of all good things, especially spiritual things. They are by their nature eternal and non-temporal, true and simple, gathering up the person divided into many things into one true good,<sup>128</sup> yet still leading to the process of renewal and growth.<sup>129</sup> They constantly flow from God, are sustained by him,<sup>130</sup> and in a certain sense are God

<sup>123</sup> WA 55, II, 879, 161-171: "[161] 113b, 8 **Similes fiant illis**. Prophetice dicit primo, quia non natura, Sed similitudine [162] fiunt et ipsi Simulachra et Idola, Zach. XIII.: 'O pastor et Idolum', [163] Quia vani sunt. Hec autem omnia facit Amor mirabilis in viribus suis, qui [164] transmutat amantem in amatum, sicut b. Aug[ustinus] dicit: 'terram diligis, [165] terra es; aurum diligis, Aurum es; Deum diligis, Deus es'. [166] 4, 264 Inde fit, Vt qui fluentia diligit, fluat, et quocunque it res, amor sequens [167] cum eo vadit. Vnde fit, vt cum alicui aufertur pecunia, simul capitur [168] voluntas diligentis aurum. Quia se captivum putat et perditum, quando [169] aurum perditur, Seque repertum, dum aurum reperitur. Quare? Nisi [170] quia aurum facta est voluntas per amorem auri. Si enim non diligeret [171] aurum, potius se liberari putaret, dum aufertur. Sic in aliis simili modo."

WA 56, 240, 31 – 241, 5: "[31] Istud 'Simul' collectivae capitur, ac si diceret: Omnes inutiles facti [1] sunt i. e. Vani et inutilia sectantes. Merito enim, qui inutilia querunt, [2] et ipsi 'inutiles' fiunt, Vani a vanis, sicut diuites a diuitiis, sic illi inutiles [3] ab inutilibus possessivae dicuntur. Quia qualia diligimus, tales efficiuntur. [4] Bl. 57. 'Deum diligis, Deus es; terram \*diligis, terra es', Ait b. Aug[ustinus]. [5] Amor enim vis est vnitiva ex amante et amato vnum quid constituens."

AWA 2, 43, 25 – 44, 3: "Tum quia per hanc voluntatem iam unum cum verbo dei factus (siquidem amor unit amantem et amatum), necesse est, ut gustet, quam bonum, suave, purum, sanctum, mirabile sit verbum dei, summum scilicet bonum, quod illi gustare non possunt, qui vel manu vel lingua tantum sunt in lege, voluntate autem in sordibus rerum mersi."

<sup>124</sup> See WA 55, I, 137, 1 – 18 (text in footnote 117).

<sup>125</sup> WA 55, I, 718: "[106, 9] **Quia satiauit** sic in viam rectam 4, 207 deductam <sup>1</sup> **animam inanem** 'vacuam' cupiditatibus temporalium<sup>6</sup>; **et sic animam esurientem** spiritualia **satiauit bonis** spiritualibus."

"GLOSSA:<sup>6</sup> quia prius est 'animam vacuam' fieri quam esurire. Et bis dicit 'satiauit' ad expressionem promptitudinis et largitatis diuine."

<sup>126</sup> WA 55, II, 81, 14-15. Luther connects this principle to the goodness of God, which the light of faith shows, and which spreads joy and gladness into the soul. On this idea see chapter 3.3.1.3.

<sup>127</sup> WA 55, II, 637, 225-227: "At quia deus in eternum est laudabilis, [226] quia bonum infinitum, nec vnquam potest exhauriri, ideo 'laudabunt [227] in secula seculorum'."

<sup>128</sup> WA 55, II, 154, 7-12; 367, 336 – 368, 337; WA 55, I, 302, 7-8. See also WA 56, 253, 10-11.

<sup>129</sup> WA 55, I, 676-678; 716-718.

<sup>130</sup> WA 55, II, 247, 53-57: "'Firmamentum' [54] autem dicit, Quia Bona spiritualia non persistunt in se, Sed in Deo sine [55] intermissione ex eo scaturientia. Nam etiamsi nullus sit impugnator, adhuc [56] salus animarum in seipsa deficeret, nisi continue in Deo et ex Deo [57] conservaretur." See also WA 55, II, 715, 484-488; WA 55, I, 753 gloss 13.



himself.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, for Luther, true goodness is not static. It is dynamic action that shares itself while remaining with itself. The above instances in which Luther calls Christ the highest good are no coincidence, but a reflection of this concept. The divine character of good to extend outside itself is portrayed most particularly in Christ, who is eternally born of the Father while staying consubstantial with him. For Luther, participation in the spiritual good is in the ultimate sense nothing else than participation in Christ and in the divine nature itself. Therefore we see in Luther's understanding of Christ as the highest good and the divine nature as a kind of 'fountain' of goodness the same basic idea that the Trinitarian meditations of Luther's Christmas sermon portrayed, now only described in a more Platonic manner.<sup>132</sup>

With regard to the question of the nature of Luther's understanding of reality, one should note that the manner in which Luther combines the so-called Platonic principle of the good (*bonum est diffusivum sui*) stemming from Pseudo-Dionysius, with the eternal birth of the Christ, is not his own innovation. Rather, here Luther seems to be related to the strand of Western Trinitarian theology introduced by Richard of St. Victor on the basis of the Pseudo-Dionysian axiom, in which the concept of self-giving good is applied to the doctrine of the Trinity. The idea finds its most famous expression in the theology of Bonaventure, who discusses the nature of God as the Highest Good in the sixth chapter of his *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*. According to Bonaventure, it follows from the Platonic principle that the highest good must share itself in the highest manner: that is, in way that is actual, intrinsic, substantial and hypostatic. Therefore, God shares himself in the substantial and hypostatic procession of the Son from the Father. In this way the apparent opposites of being and action, rest and procession are united in God, and the birth of the Son is contemplated through the idea of the highest good. Luther's way of speaking about God as the highest good especially in connection with the eternal birth of the Son clearly represents this line of thought.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, one should note that the Thomistic understanding of the highest good differs significantly from that of Bonaventure. Thomas defines the nature of God as the highest good as a reference to God as the end towards which creatures strain and which as the *final cause* is the cause of their existence. He thus

<sup>131</sup> WA 55, II, 284, 111-120: "[111] 53, 8 **Confitebor nomini tuo, quoniam bonum est.** Non ait: quoniam [112] bonum dat, Sed propter esse bonum, non propter dare bonum, q. d. propter [113] seipsum, non propter lucrum. Nam 'Domini nomen bonum est in conspectu [114] sanctorum suorum', Psal[mo] precedenti 51. Hoc est: Nomen Domini [115] non dat sanctis bonum aliud quam est ipsummet, Sed ipsummet est bonum [116] eorum. Et sic dat seipsum, et ita non dat Sed est bonum et tota beatitudo [117] sanctorum. Nam sicut dicitur: 'Deus dat sanctis seipsum', quod valet: [118] 'Deus est bonum sanctorum suorum', Ita etiam Nomen eius dat seipsum illis, [119] i. e. est bonum eorum. Est autem nomen Dei ipse Christus filius Dei, [120] verbum quo se dicit, et nomen, quo se nominat, ipsum in eternitate."

WA 56, 75, 13-15: "[8, 5] **Qui enim secundum carnem [10] sunt:** in prima creatura, nondum renati in spiritum per baptismum Vel [11] penitentiam **quae carnis sunt/** i. e. bona creata **sapiunt:** i. e. placent eis [12] talia et bona videntur ideo et non 'consentiunt legi Dei, quoniam [13] bona est', Sed alia sapiunt et sentiunt **qui uero secundum spiritum sunt/** [14] ex spiritu et Deo nati in aliam creaturam **quae sunt spiritus/ (sentiunt).** [15] i. e. bona increata, que sunt ipse Deus<sup>20</sup>"

See also WA 55, II, 119, 20-23; 631, 60-64. However, the spiritual goods can also in some places be considered as distinct from God; WA 55, II, 24-33.

<sup>132</sup> For an analysis of the Christmas sermon see chapter 2.2.1.

<sup>133</sup> *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* VI, 2. According to Ilia Delio Bonaventure's entire metaphysics can be called "the metaphysics of good" because of the central status of the idea of self-diffusing good in his Trinitarian theology. See Delio 1999, 228-246; Hayes 1978, 88-94; McGinn 1998, 88-89; Schumacher 2011, 117-121.

rejects the Trinitarian application as well as the idea of the divine plenitude as the principle of creation. Mannermaa's criticism of the application of the idea of the highest good in theology seems justified in relation to the Thomistic understanding. However, Luther does not understand the nature of God's goodness in a Thomistic, but rather in a Platonic manner, as exemplified in Bonaventure and the preceding early medieval Augustinian tradition of the Victorines. Luther rejects Thomas's Aristotelian idea (whether this rejection of Thomas is conscious is unclear) and joins Bonaventure's interpretation, which clearly points to the Platonist and Augustinian understanding of reality as a basis here for Luther's thought.<sup>134</sup>

In the light of the discovery that the divine goodness is not understood by Luther as the final end (as it is by Thomas), but as the motivating principle of God's action, it is moreover quite natural to relate the texts where Luther speaks about God as the highest good to those where he speaks about God as the ultimate Giver. Luther explicitly states: "this is to be God: not to receive good, but to give; indeed, to retribute good for evil".<sup>135</sup> It is in the nature of God as the true good to share and bestow his goodness upon others.<sup>136</sup> Luther writes:

By this he proves to be not a false, but the true and living God, that he does not take from us any good or merit, but bestows everything for free. It is after all according to all judgement proper and fitting for the divinity to suffice for itself, to require nothing from anyone, and to do good to others without reward.<sup>137</sup>

How then is Luther's insistence that God only looks into the depths, not to the heights, to be understood?<sup>138</sup> Luther considers only God to be good in the sense that only he is the real, absolute good. All other goodness is dependent on him and received from him. In relation to the goodness of God, all else is evil. However in relation to themselves there is something good in all creatures, at least their existence (*natura*) itself. Luther thus agrees with the idea of existence as participation in the being of God. Were a person though to call him- or herself good in an absolute sense, he or she would rob God of God's

<sup>134</sup> See Sth I q 5 a 4; Kretzmann 1990; te Velde 1995, 30-35. According to Kretzmann, Bonaventure's idea of the Father as *fontalis plenitudo* is "directly repudiated by Aquinas". For the intra-Thomistic discussion and a defense of Thomas' use of the concept see Blankenhorn 2002.

<sup>135</sup> WA 55, II, 883, 102-103: "Sed hoc est esse [103] Deum: non accipere bona, Sed dare, ergo pro malis Bona retribuere."

<sup>136</sup> WA 55, II, 934, 1261 – 935, 1270: "Item 'Bonitas' vt supra dicitur, [1262] Quia redditur non pro bono quod esset 'Iustum', Sed pro malo nobis et iniustitiis [1263] nostris. Sic Apostolus dicit Galat. 5., Quod fructus spiritus sit non [1264] tantum benignitas, Sed et bonitas. 'Benignus' enim est, qui liberaliter, [1265] hilariter, benigne, teut[onice] **gutwilliglich** benefacit, Vel qui amicaliter [1266] cum aliis Negociatur. [[benignus **fruntlich, gutig** bonus.]] Sed 'Bonus' est [1267] perfectior, sicut pater suus celestis, qui et malis benefacit et ingratias, reddens [1268] bonum pro malo et augens bona ingratias, sicut facit et Deus. O rara [1269] 4, 337 aus! Benignus autem potest | retrahere manum Et suo offensori non benefacere [1270] ac cessare benefacere, Sed non bonus."

<sup>137</sup> WA 55, II, 888, 13 – 889, 17: "Quia et per hoc ostendit se esse [14] non fictum, Sed verum et viuentem Deum, Quod nihil boni et meriti a nobis [15] suscepit, Sed omnino gratis tribuit. Est enim omni Iudicio rationis diuinitatis [16] hoc proprium et decens sibi sufficere, nullius indigere et aliis gratis [17] benefacere."

<sup>138</sup> E.g. WA 7, 547, 1-10 on which see footnote 108; WA 55, II, 872, 39 – 873, 66.

goodness, thereby making oneself a liar.<sup>139</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to consider oneself evil and confess one's dependence on the divine good.<sup>140</sup> True faith confesses that one lacks and needs goodness, and acknowledges God as the one who is good: the true Creator, who makes all things out of nothing. For the one who makes such a confession, God also gives his goodness in a manner exceeding the goodness shared through being created. The gift of this exceeding goodness is participation in God himself as good.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>139</sup> WA 55, II, 934, 1237-1255: "[1237] Vt sepe supra dictum est, Quod Deum nullus potest dicere bonum, nisi [1238] qui eum solum bonum dicit, sicut vere solus bonus est ac per hoc nos [1239] mali, Vt Luce 11.: 'Vos cum sitis mali'. Et Matth. 6.: 'Sufficit diei malitia [1240] sua.' Non tantum autem Incipientes eum solum bonum habent confiteri, [1241] Sed et proficientes, qui iam boni ex ipso sunt; non solum ideo quia mali [1242] fuerunt, Sed etiam, quia mali sunt. Nam cum nullus sit in hac vita perfectus, [1243] semper ad eam bonitatem, quam nondum habet, dicitur malus, licet [1244] ad eam quam habet, sit bonus. Nam nullus, etiam pessimus, est, quin [1245] aliquid in se habeat boni, saltem nature. Et nullus, licet optimus, est, quin [1246] aliquid habeat mali. Vnde merito potest coram Deo dici malus. Sic [1247] etiam de omnibus similibus, scil. Iustus, sapiens, verax etc. Vt Apoc. 22.: [1248] 'Qui Iustus est, Iustificetur adhuc', Sic qui bonus est, bonificetur adhuc. [1249] Quare cum sit talis apud nos mixtio, si dixerimus, quoniam boni sumus et [1250] peccatum non habemus, veritas in nobis non est, Cum solus Deus bonus, [1251] Iustus, verax sit. Nullus autem solus malus, Iniustus, mendax est, quia [1252] pure malus esse non potest vlllo modo. Igitur semper medii sumus inter bonitatem, [1253] quam ex Deo habemus, et malitiam, quam ex nobis habemus, donec [1254] in futuro absorbeantur omnia mala et sit solus Deus omnia in omnibus, [1255] Vt iam nec nos nostri simus, Sed Dei et Deus noster." See also AWA 2, 291, 11 – 292, 17; 340, 16 – 341, 5.

<sup>140</sup> WA 55, II, 889, 29-40: "Sed non potest noster [29] Deus esse et sua nobis dare, nisi primo doceat se nostra nolle et nostra [30] nihil esse apud eum, [Isaie 1.], vt sic humiliati capaces efficiamur et appetentes [31] [eorum], que eius sunt. Et hoc est Iustum. Sic psalmus ait: 'Iustus [32] es Domine et rectum Iudicium tuum', Et iterum: 'Cognoui Domine, quia [33] equitas Iudicia tua, et in veritate tua humiliasti me'. Si enim aliquid nostri [34] susciperet et non penitus reprobaret, iam nec verus Deus nec solus [35] Bonus esset, Quia et nos beneficiis cum eo certaremus. Nunc autem vult, [36] quod nos tantummodo accipiamus, et ipse solus det, et ita sit vere Deus. [37] Vnde Nisi quis se confiteatur malum, non potest confiteri Domino, quoniam [38] bonus. Vbi enim Deum bonum dicis, te bonum esse neges oportet et [39] 4, 279 omnino | malum confitearis. Non simul se et te communiter bonum patietur [40] nominari, quia Deum se, te autem creaturam vult haberi."

<sup>141</sup> WA 55, II, 800, 40 – 801, 47: "Secundo trop[ologice], [41] Quando nos confessionem huiusmodi et laudem et honorem ei exhibemus; [42] tunc enim iam in nobis etiam talis est, qualis in persona est. Et fides eius Est [43] 4, 173 tunc enim confessio et decor, quem ipse spiritualiter | induit. Quia per [44] fidem eum confitemur et honoramus atque decoramus. Sed hoc non fit, [45] nisi nos negemus, confundamus et defedemus. Non enim simul illum decorabimus [46] et nos, Non simul illum confitebimur et nos, Sed nos abnegantes [47] eum confitebimur Et nos polluentes eum decorabimus."

WA 55, II, 872, 39 – 873, 67: "[39] 4, 256 112, 6 Secunda, Quod **humilia respicit in cęlo et in terra**. Ad quid [40] autem respiciat, patet, quia vt suscitet et collocet cum principibus populi [41] sui, i. e. in altis, vt et in ipsis habitet. [...] [55] BI 228v 112, 7 Tercia, **Quod suscitatur a terra inopem et de stercore** etc. Non [56] enim quiescit respiciendo, Sed respicit, vt suscitet. Et hec est Natura veri [57] Creatoris, Ex nihilo omnia facere. Idcirco Nullum suscitatur, nisi qui sit non [58] suscitatus, Sed iacens et deiectus. Nec erigit vllum nisi depressum, Ita vt, [59] nisi sit nihil erectionis et suscitationis in ipso, Sed tota deiectio et depressio, [60] non suscitatur nec erigit. Quamuis autem omnes in veritate simus [61] deiecti et depressi, tamen non omnes erigit et suscitatur, Sed tantum eos, [62] qui agnoscunt se deiectos et depressos. Qui enim sibi videntur erecti et [63] stantes, coram mundo reputantur et sunt erecti et stantes, Licet in veritate [64] miserrime sint deiecti et depressi. 'Beatus itaque qui intelligit [65] super egenum et pauperem', scil. etiam super seipsum talem intelligens [66] est. Et hanc nouam regulam Christus attulit humilitatis, que prius erat [67] ignota."

WA 55, II, 284: "[111] 53, 8 **Confitebor nomini tuo, quoniam bonum est**. Non ait: quoniam [112] bonum dat, Sed propter esse bonum, non propter dare bonum, q. d. propter [113] seipsum, non propter lucrum. Nam 'Domini nomen bonum est in conspectu [114] sanctorum suorum', Psal[mo] precedenti 51. Hoc est: Nomen Domini [115] non dat sanctis bonum aliud quam est ipsummet, Sed ipsummet est bonum [116] eorum. Et sic dat seipsum, et ita non dat Sed est bonum et tota beatitudo [117] sanctorum. Nam sicut dicitur: 'Deus dat sanctis seipsum', quod valet: [118] 'Deus est bonum sanctorum suorum', Ita etiam Nomen eius

Furthermore, Luther states that the goodness of God permeates all creation: All creatures exist to serve others, not themselves. Even their “whole substance” (*tota substantia*) is in God’s law of love. The only exceptions are the human beings and the devil, who seek good for themselves.<sup>142</sup> However, when the human will is transformed through union with God (the highest good), the human person also becomes a part of this outflow of God’s love in the world.<sup>143</sup> In this union the empty human will is “satisfied” and “filled” with spiritual goods (i.e., God himself) in a way by means of which carnal greed and human love seeking good for itself is extinguished.<sup>144</sup>

Therefore, Mannermaa is certainly correct in arguing that the division of the two opposite kinds of love holds an important place in Luther’s theology. Furthermore, he is right in that Luther thinks that the Aristotelian concept of love seeking its own proper good has infiltrated theology in Scholasticism and perverted the understanding of love.<sup>145</sup> However, as has been argued above, Mannermaa is wrong in portraying the idea of God as the highest good as something opposite to Luther’s thought.<sup>146</sup> This is because Luther understands the nature of goodness according to the Platonic principle of the good and its Trinitarian application: as the fountain from which good springs forth freely. The action of the will does not therefore end when it grasps the *summum bonum*, but it rather becomes a participant in the dynamic overflow of that good, which is analogical to Luther’s understanding of the Trinity as movement. Likewise, Mannermaa misses the mark when he attempts to present Luther’s distinction of two kinds of love as an antithesis to theologies which have a negative attitude “toward the world” and where “love for God ... stands fundamentally in competition with any kind of love for any transitory good in God’s creation.”<sup>147</sup> The brief review above of sections from *Dictata* to *Operationes in*

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dat seipsum illis, [119] i. e. est bonum eorum. Est autem nomen Dei ipse Christus filius Dei, [120] verbum quo se dicit, et nomen, quo se nominat, ipsum in eternitate.”

<sup>142</sup> AWA 2, 48, 13-21. “Et ‘dare fructum’ indicat hunc beatum virum caritate (quam in omni lege domini videmus praecipi) servire non sibi, sed promixis. Non est enim arbor ulla, quae sibi fructificet, sed dat fructus suos alteri, immo nulla creatura sibi vivit aut servit (praeter hominem et diabolum). Sol non sibi lucet, aqua non sibi fluit etc. Ita omnis creatura servat legem caritatis, et tota substantia sua est in lege domini; sed et humani corporis membra non sibiipsis serviunt. Solus affectus animi impius est. Hic enim non solum sua nemini dat, nemini servit, nemini benevult, sed omnium omnia sibi rapit, in omnibus, in deo ipso quarens, quae sua sunt [...]”

<sup>143</sup> WA 55, II, 22, 7-17; 23, 14 – 24, 2; AWA 2, 40, 3 – 41, 15; 43, 21 – 44, 17.

<sup>144</sup> WA 55, I, 676: “102, 4] **Qui redimit de interitu** mortis spiritualis et corporalis **vitam tuam** nunc anime, tunc etiam corporis :<sup>4</sup> **qui coronat** ‘circundat’ et ornat **te in misericordia** gratia **et miserationibus** quibus sustinet nostras quotidianas negligentias. [102, 5] **Qui replet in bonis** scil. veris et spiritualibus<sup>4</sup> **desyderium tuum** hoc enim necessarium est, BI 81 4, 163 alioquin non est capax<sup>5</sup>”

WA 55, I, 676 gloss 4, 1-5: “GLOSSA:<sup>4</sup>) [1] Bona autem temporalia secundum Hugo[nem] tantum afficiunt, [2] Sed non satiant; titillant, non replent. ‘Quo plus potantur, plus sitiuntur [3] aq[ua]’. Eadem ratione dicit ‘Coronat’, Quia spiritualis misericordia complectitur [4] miserum et suscipit, Sed temporalis tantummodo tangit ex vno [5] latere, scil. temporis.”

WA 55, I, 718: “[106, 9] **Quia satiauit** sic in viam rectam 4, 207 deductam <sup>1</sup> **animam inanem** ‘vacuam’ cupiditatis temporalium<sup>6</sup>: **et sic animam esurientem** spiritualia **satiauit bonis** spiritualibus.”

WA 55, I, 718 gloss 6: “GLOSSA:<sup>6</sup>) quia prius est ‘animam vacuum’ fieri quam esurire. Et bis dicit ‘satiauit’ ad expressionem promptitudinis et largitatis diuine.”

<sup>145</sup> E.g. AWA 2, 40, 3-7.

<sup>146</sup> So also Juntunen 1998, 132. Though Juntunen still follows the two-kinds-of-love scheme in his interpretation, he recognizes that the problem for Luther lies in the inability of the capacities of the human being to understand the goodness of God in a manner that could work for their benefit.

<sup>147</sup> Mannermaa 2010, 46.

*Psalmos*, in which Luther deals with the nature of spiritual goods, already reveals that the spiritual goods stand fundamentally in opposition to “vain” and “transient” earthly goods, which fail to satisfy the soul. On the contrary, Luther seems to share a view of the nature of true good with regard to the human will which is quite consonant with early medieval Augustinianism. It is exactly because of the infinite and dynamic nature of the spiritual good in opposition to earthly good, that the union with the spiritual good captivates the human being into becoming a participant in the movement of God’s outflowing love. Therefore the distinction criticized by Mannermaa between two kind of good things (static and perishable vs. infinite and eternal) rather seems to form the basis for Luther’s distinction between the two kinds of love. This is because as we saw above, according to Luther it is the nature of the object that is loved which determines the nature of the loving subject. However, in the following chapters I will argue that Luther’s conception of faith as the requirement for grasping spiritual goods holds a higher importance than the distinction of the two kinds of love in understanding the human person’s relation to visible and invisible things and to the hiddenness of God in Luther’s theology of cross. This is so, because for Luther love and will turn toward the objects of knowledge. Only that which is known can be loved, and with regard to God, this knowledge comes from faith.

### 2.2.3. God as Light and Wisdom

Light is another one of the images Luther uses to illustrate the nature of God. Alluding to 1. Timothy 6:16, Luther describes God as he who “dwells in inaccessible light”, with reference to the tradition of negative and mystical theology.<sup>148</sup> Though one might first lay emphasis on the inaccessibility of this light, on the other hand, for Luther God is “not only light but Sun, source and inextinguishable origin of light”.<sup>149</sup> “Light is divinity, Sun burning through the day”.<sup>150</sup> Thus, though God in his divine essence is inaccessible light,

<sup>148</sup> With reference to “summa divinitate” earlier at WA 55, I, 134, 9-10 Luther writes at WA 55, I, 138, 5-7: “[17, 12] **Et posuit tenebras latibulum suum** i. e. [6] factus est incomprehensibilis [ita quod attingi non potest, ‘habitans [7] lucem inaccessibilem’], vel in fide latet et videtur per tenebras intellectus [8] [per negationes].”

WA 55, I, 138 gloss 15, 13-17: “Exprimatur enim in hiis [14] incomprehensibilitas diuinitatis, quam vident exstatici et contemplatiui, [15] vt apostolus Ro. XI.: ‘o altitudo’ etc. Quia sicut Volantes nos nequimus [16] consequi, apprehendere, Sic Deus supereminet et incomprehensibilis fit [17] omni contemplanti et sursum spectanti in celum diuinitatis.”

WA 55, II, 138, 5-10: “[5] 17, 12 **Latibulum** Dei Est **tenebre**, primo quia in fidei enygmate et caligine [6] habitat. Secundo Quia ‘habitat lucem inaccessibilem’, ita quod [7] BI 36 nullus intellectus ad eum pertingere potest, nisi suo lumine \* omisso [8] altiore leuatus fuerit. Ideo b. Dionysius docet Ingredi in tenebras anagogicas [9] et per negationem ascendere. Quia sic est Deus absconditus et [10] incomprehensibilis.”

WA 57, b53, 3-6: “**sed in ipsum** [4] **coelum** ad ipsam diuinitatem, quae in aliis tenebris quam illa sancta [5] i. e. in luce inaccessa habitat **ut appareat** sicut optimus et fidelis sacerdos [6] **nunc vultui Dei** scilicet clarissima presentia sine medio velaminis”

<sup>149</sup> WA 55, II, 644, 394-395: “Sed [395] nunc Dominus non tantum lux, Sed sol, fons et indeficiens origo lucis”

<sup>150</sup> WA 55, II, 371, 420-423: “Quia Vmbra constat ex lumine [421] et corpore: Lumen est diuinitas, Sol vrens per diem, Quia inimicitia [422] inter nos et Deum. Accessit corpus humanitatis, et facta est nubes et [423] vmbra refrigeriumque nobis.”

this light spreads itself outside of itself. The Son, Christ, in accordance with the Nicene Creed, is the “light from light” who makes the Father known:

**Because with you**, Father, as ‘the Word was with God’ and ‘he was in beginning with God’, **is the fountain Son of life** of all: **and in your light** in your Son, who is ‘light from light’ **we see light** you, Father.<sup>151</sup>

Luther describes Christ as the image of glory, the brilliance (*splendor*) and reflection (*relucentia*) of God. According to Luther, it is through Christ as the consubstantial image of the Father that God knows himself. Christ is the true, substantial image and reflection (*relucentia*) of God, but also the created beings are his image, only not to God himself but to themselves.<sup>152</sup> Therefore of special interest for Luther’s understanding of reality is the way in which Luther not only describes the Son but also the created world as a *relucentia* (“refulgence”, “reflection”):

The very best Creator created all visible things in Wisdom, so that they would not only minister in so innumerable uses and ways to the body, which nevertheless cannot grasp the Wisdom in which they were created and which they reflect [*que in illis relucet*], but also to the soul, which by the means of its intellect and affect is capable [*capax*] of that Wisdom.<sup>153</sup>

The divine Wisdom (i.e., Christ), Word of God and light from light is therefore reflected in the creation. In this sense all creatures are ‘words of God’, participating in the Wisdom of God.<sup>154</sup> Nevertheless, only the soul with its intellect and affect can grasp that

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<sup>151</sup> WA 55, I, 316: “[35, 10] **Quoniam apud te** patrem, sicut ‘verbum erat apud Deum’, Et ‘hoc erat in principio apud Deum’ **est fons vitae** omnis : **et in lumine tuo** filio tuo, qui est ‘lumen de lumine’ **videbimus lumen** te patrem.”

In the translation of Luther’s interlinear glosses the Latin word order is more or less preserved. The Psalm text taken from the Vulgate is written in bold, and the linear glosses that are Luther’s additions are in plain type.

<sup>152</sup> WA 57, b99, 12 – 101, 2: “[12] Hoc idem ad Colossen. 1. dicit: ‘Qui est imago Dei invisibilis’ i. e. eius [13] Dei, qui non videtur. Et Sapientie 7.: ‘Candor enim est lucis eterne et [14] speculum sine macula Dei maiestatis et imago bonitatis illius.’ Splendor [15] enim seu relucencia Dei dicitur imago glorie Dei, quia similitudo glorie [16] Dei, in qua se ipsum pater cognoscit, non nobis, sed Deo sibi que ipsi [1] relucet. [...] non quod nobis sit figura [9] substance Dei, sed ipsimet Deo, ita quod solus Deus suam formam [10] in ipso cognoscit. Unde non simpliciter dixit: ‘splendor eius et figura [11] eius’ — nam et angeli et homines sunt imagines splendoris, signacula [12] maiestatis Dei — sed dicit: ‘splendor glorie et figura substance eius’, [13] ut intimam et propriam figuram intelligamus Dei per eam. Nos enim [1] sumus imagines Dei nobis potius quam Deo, quia non Deus se per nos, [2] sed nos Deum per nos cognoscimus.”

<sup>153</sup> WA 55, II, 511, 150-154: “[150] Sic enim optimus creator omnia visibilia in sapientia creavit, ut non [151] tantum corpori ministrant in tam innumerabilibus visibus et ministeriis, [152] quod tamen sapientie, in qua creata sunt et que in illis relucet, non est [153] BI 122 v capax, Sed etiam anime quo ad intellectum et affectum, \* que sapientie [154] capax est.”

<sup>154</sup> WA 55, II, 512, 176-180: “Quanto enim res creata profundius agnoscitur, tanto plus [177] mirabilium in ea videtur, scilicet quomodo plena sit sapientia Dei. Vnde in [178] eadem re multa videt spiritualis homo et mirabilem sapientiam Dei, Insensati [179] autem iuxta psalmum non intellexerunt opera Domini, Sed tantummodo [180] senserunt.”

WA 55, II, 535, 33 – 536, 40: “[33] Plus philosophie et sapientie est in isto versu: ‘Aperiam in parabolis [34] os meum’, quam si mille metaphysicas Scripsisset Aristoteles. Quia hinc [35] discitur, quod omnis creatura visibilis est parabola et plena mystica eruditione, [36] secundum quod sapientia Dei disponit omnia suaviter et omnia [37] 3, 561 in | sapientia facta sunt, Omnisque creatura Dei verbum Dei est: ‘Quia [38]

reflection.<sup>155</sup> That Wisdom is therefore only perceptible to the spiritual person, as the true intellect has been blinded by original sin.<sup>156</sup> It is the wisdom from which “the invisible things of God” should have been known as in Romans 1:18-20,<sup>157</sup> but to which human beings have become blind by their turning towards creatures alone: not as perceived in God and pointing to God, but apart from God.<sup>158</sup> Because of this turning away from God it has become hidden wisdom, only accessible in Christ.<sup>159</sup> However, Luther does not mean by the light which the Creation reflects only the intellectual light, but that all beings by virtue of their existence share in the divine light and reflect it, though this reflected light is not as bright as the full divine light who is Christ:

For the knowledge by which an angel knows God through another angel and the knowledge by which it knows God face-to-face differ as much as the knowledge of the Sun through a cloud from its proper brightness, because a creature is not pure light, but is rather full of light from light [*lucida a luce*]. So also are the angels covered by superior waters,

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ipse dixit, et facta sunt.’ Ergo Creaturas inspicere oportet tanquam locutiones [39] Dei. Atque ideo ponere cor in res creatas Est in signum et non rem [40] ponere, que est Deus solus. ‘Ex operibus enim istis Inuisibilia Dei intellecta [41] conspiciuntur’, Ro. 1.”

<sup>155</sup> WA 55, I, 850: “[135, 5] **Qui fecit celos** visibiles et Inuisibiles **in intellectu** i. e. ‘in sapientia’, vt psal. 103.: ‘omnia in sapientia fecisti’<sup>5</sup> Et 32.: ‘Verbo Domini celi firmati sunt’ etc.”

WA 55, I, 850 gloss 5, 1-2: “GLOSSA: <sup>5</sup> [1] seu per sapientiam et intellectum, qui est filius, verbum patris, per [2] quem omnia facta sunt.”

<sup>156</sup> WA 55, II, 511, 154– 512, 161: “Vnde Psal. 31. Spiritus sanctus hortatur nos, ne efficiamur ‘sicut [155] equus et mulus’, quibus non est intellectus. Nam creaturis tantum secundum [156] corpus vti et in illis non affectum et intellectum in Deum dirigere [157] Est ea tantum sensu percipere ‘sicut equus et mulus’, que non diutius [158] vident, quam cum presentia sunt. Sic et illi obliuiscuntur operum Domini [159] et non memorantur. Quod vt psalmus iste indicaret, Non ait: videbo, [160] audiam aut sentiam opera tua, quod faciunt omnes insensati, Sed ‘memor [161] ero et meditabor’, sic intellectualis et spiritualis homo.”

<sup>157</sup> WA 56, 11-12: “[1, 18] **Reuelatur enim** [2] sc. in eodem euangelio **ira dei** quod Deus sit iratus, licet adhuc differat [3] penam **de caelo super omnem impietatem** propter auersionem a vero [4] Deo et **iniustitiam** propter conuersionem cultus ad Idola **hominum**. precipue [5] Gentium **eorum qui veritatem dei** i. e. verum Deum cognitum [6] seu veram notitiam de Deo **in iniusticia** aliis sc. honorem tribuendo [7] **detinent**: sc. non glorificando et gratias agendo et colendo Deum, vt [8] infra quod autem veritatem Dei habuerint et sic detinuerint, probat, [9] quia [1, 19] **quia<sup>2</sup> quod notum est dei** / i. e. notitia Dei Vel de Deo **manifestum** [10] **est in illis**. i. e. manifestam habent eam de ipso in se **Deus enim illis** [11] **manifestauit**. i. e. satis ostendit eis, vnde ab eis poterat cognosci, sc. vt [12] sequitur [1, 20] **Inuisibilia enim** sc. bonitas, sapientia, Iustitia etc. **ipsius** [13] **a creatura mundi** i. e. a creatione mundi **per ea quae facta sunt** / i. e. [14] ex operibus, hoc est, cum Videant, quod sint opera, ergo et factorem [15] necesse est esse **intellecta conspiciuntur**: non quidem per sensum, Sed per [16] intellectum cognita **sempiterna quoque eius virtus** potestas hoc enim [17] arguunt opera **et diuinitas** / i. e. quod sit vere Deus **ita ut sint inexcusabiles**<sup>3</sup>. [18] tam ii, qui primo sic scierint peccauerunt, quam quos tali ignorantia [1] suos posteros fecerunt [1, 21] **Quia**<sup>1</sup> ideo sunt inexcusabiles **cum cognouissent** [2] **deum** / sicut iam probatum est Sed hanc cognitionem detinuerunt [3] in iniustitia”

WA 56, 11, gloss 3: “GLOSSA:<sup>3</sup> [24] I. e. a principio mundi vsque ad finem semper tanta fecit et facit [25] opera, vt si vltra sensum intellectus tantum adhibeatur, facile et manifeste [26] Deus possit cognosci. Quod et factum fuit in principio mundi, [27] licet paulatim proficiendo magis ac magis obscurarentur impii propter [14] ingratitude[m] vsque ad Idolatriam, ita vt nec ipsi nec posteri eorum [15] per eos decepti sint excusabiles, sicut et Iudeis contingit.”

<sup>158</sup> WA 55, II, 822, 628-641; 824, 698-708; 825, 723-739.

<sup>159</sup> WA 56, 237, 20-28; WA 55, II, 500, 19-22.

when they look at themselves through each other, because they see God in a more obscure way in each other than God in God.<sup>160</sup>

In the quotation above we can see how Luther utilizes the Augustinian idea of morning and evening knowledge. The immediate and direct knowledge of God face-to-face is brighter, because it is knowledge of God derived directly from the divine light. The knowledge received through other beings (which corresponds to Augustine's evening knowledge) is dimmer, because here the divine light is not direct, but reflected through created beings.<sup>161</sup> Nevertheless, it is light: Luther writes that no creature, even an evil one, is wholly without the divine light. But God only "walks" in the evil creatures, whereas he "dwells" in the blessed ones:

Although the souls of sinners and evil angels are 'high' according to their nature, yet because they involve themselves in the lowest and earthly things, they are deservedly called 'low'. Granted, God is also in them and they are, move and live in God, but he does not steadily dwell in them. None namely, however evil they be, lack all light of divine illustration. But because they do not have him inhabiting and abiding constantly in them or universally in everything because of the darkness mixed in them, he is properly said to not dwell in them. However what if by 'high' we also understand the blessed, because all transitory and restless things are rather a way of God, in which he moves when they move? But the blessed are his mansion, in which he dwells permanently as a Lord who temporally walks in them like a pilgrim. As Jeremiah 14: 'Because you have come to the land as a settler and as traveller declining to stay.' Therefore those who receive God according to the flesh and the letter have him as a traveller, but he does not make his mansion among them, because they are not on high or the high, but the low. They are flesh and not spirit, letter but not truth, shadow and not fullness. Therefore it is proper to God alone to dwell on high, as it is to God alone to slide down intimately and be present and dwell in the spirit. And therefore he did not say: 'who dwells above the high'. For even though he is infinitely above everything, still his dwelling place is in the blessed rational creature, and in a certain way he stays in them.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> WA 55, II, 805, 161-167: "Quia tantum differt cognitio, qua [162] angelus Deum in altero angelo cognoscit, et cognitio, qua Deum facie ad [163] faciem cognoscit, quantum differt cognitio solis in nube opposita et qua in [164] 4, 176 propria claritate, Cum creatura non sit pura lux, | Sed potius lucida a luce. [165] Sic enim et in angelis teguntur aquis superiora, quando sese Inuicem inspiciunt, [166] quia obscurius Deum in alterutris cognoscunt, quam Deum in [167] Deo."

<sup>161</sup> On morning and evening knowledge in Augustine, see *De Gen. ad lit.* IV, 21-31; *De Civ. Dei* XI, 7; 9; 29. See also Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q58 a 6-7; Bonaventure distinguishes between three types: morning, midday and evening knowledge, see *Itinerarium* I, 3.

<sup>162</sup> WA 55, II, 871, 19 – 872, 38: "Licet [20] enim Anime peccatrices et angeli mali sint 'alte' secundum naturam, [21] tamen quia se infimis inuoluunt et terrenis, merito inferiora dicuntur. In [22] quibus licet sit Deus et ipsi in Deo sint, moueantur et uiuant, non tamen [23] stabiliter habitat in eis. Nulli enim, quantumvis mali sint, carent omni [24] lucis diuine illustratione. Sed quia domesticam et manentem perpetue atque [25] vniuersaliter in omnibus [non] habent, propter tenebras admixtas in [26] illis, recte non habitare in illis dicitur. Quid si per 'alta' intelliguntur [27] etiam Beati, ideo Quia omnia transitoria et inquieti sunt potius via Dei, [28] in quibus vadit, dum illa vadunt? Sed beati sunt domus eius, in qua permanentes [29] vt Dominus habitat, qui in illis temporaliter velut peregrinus [30] ambulat. Sicut Ierem. 14.: 'Quare futurus es in terra sicut colonus et quasi [31] viator declinans ad manendum.' Sic qui Deum recipiunt secundum carnem [32] et literam, habent eum vt viatorem, Sed non facit apud eos mansionem, [33] quia sunt non in altis seu alta, Sed inferna; Sunt Caro et non spiritus, [34] Sunt litera et non veritas, Vmbra et non plenitudo.



To place the above quotation in context, it comes immediately before a passage in which Luther describes God as the one who looks down upon the humble and creates everything out of nothing.<sup>163</sup> This context confirms that participation in the divine light is linked not only to understanding, but to existence. All of the above texts point to an ontology of participation: creatures exist as participating in the divine light. With regard to this light they are “full of light” (*lucida*) “from light” (*a luce*), (i.e., from Christ) receiving their being and existence from him. In and of themselves they are shadow and darkness. However, only a creature which recognizes its dependence on the divine light is able to see this light. A creature turning to itself or other creatures is not able to discern this light, but because of this turning away it becomes an obstacle (*obex*) to the light and blind to it.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, there are different stages of participation in the divine light, which themselves are reminiscent of the categories of created beings listed in the 1514 Christmas sermon. Though all creatures seem to share in the light by the virtue of their being created, according to Luther it is properly the rational creature (*vivum rationale*) which is capable (*capax*) of discerning the light. Yet, of the rational creatures only those who are blessed (*beatus*) are the ones in whom God ‘dwells’ and ‘stays’. The other creatures merely “move and live” in God and God “walks” in them, which again brings to mind Luther’s understanding of movement in the created world.<sup>165</sup>

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Igitur solius [35] Dei proprium est in altis habitare, sicut solius est Dei intime labi et in spiritu [36] presentem esse et manere. Vnde et non dixit ‘qui super alta habitat’. [37] Quia licet sit super omnia infinite, tamen habitaculum eius est vivum rationale [38] beatum, et in ipsis quoque manet.”

<sup>163</sup> WA 55, II, 872, 39-57.

<sup>164</sup> WA 55, II, 500, 18-21: “‘Illuminat’ autem ‘mirabiliter’, [19] Quia per fidem intus, ita vt nullus homo lucem eorum videat. ‘Lux enim [20] in tenebris lucet, et tenebre eam non comprehenderunt.’ Sapientia enim [21] Dei stultitia est carnalibus, et non possunt eam lucem videre.”

WA 56, 238, 17-20: “Igitur Sinistrales Impii non [18] intelligunt, quia visibilibus in vanitate concupiscentiæ obsecantur. Dextrales [19] vero non intelligunt, quia in sensu proprio de sapientia et Iustitia [20] sua impediuntur. Et sic sibiipsis sunt obex Lucis diuinæ.”

<sup>165</sup> On the ontology of participation, see also Hunzinger 1905, 7-11. Hunzinger, however, misses the point that in such an ontology *all creatures* already share in some regard in the divine light due to their existence. Thus even creaturely existence turned away from God is not the complete opposite of existence as participation in the divine, but also it participates in the divine existence. Thus the temporal is not in this sense the complete opposite of the spiritual.

The way Luther speaks about the movement of God in creatures is analogous to the way in which Luther speaks about the action of God in *De Servo Arbitrio*, WA 18, 709, 10 – 710, 6: “Primum, etiam Ratio et Diatribe concedit, Deum omnia in omnibus [11] operari ac sine ipso nihil fieri nec efficax esse. Est enim omnipotens, pertinetque [12] [Eph. 1, 19] id ad omnipotentiam suam, ut Paulus ait ad Ephesios. Iam Satan [13] et homo lapsi et deserti a Deo non possunt velle bonum, hoc est ea quae [14] Deo placent aut quae Deus vult. Sed sunt in sua desideria conversi perpetuo, [15] ut non possint non quaerere quae sua sunt. Haec igitur eorum [16] voluntas et natura sic a Deo aversa non est nihil. Neque enim Satan et [17] impius homo nihil est aut nullam naturam aut voluntatem habent, licet [18] corruptam et aversam naturam habeant. Illud igitur reliquum quod dicimus [19] naturae in impio et Satana ut creatura et opus Dei non est minus subiectum [20] omnipotentiae et actioni divinae quam omnes aliae creaturae et opera [21] Dei. Quando ergo Deus omnia movet et agit, necessario movet etiam et [22] agit in Satana et impio. Agit autem in illis taliter, quales illi sunt et [23] quales inveniunt, hoc est, cum illi sint aversi et mali et rapiantur motu illo [24] divinae omnipotentiae, non nisi aversa et mala faciunt, tanquam si eques [25] agat equum tripedem vel bipedem, agit quidem taliter, qualis equus est, [26] hoc est equus male incedit. Sed quid faciat eques? equum talem simul [27] agit cum equis sanis, illo male, istis bene, aliter non potest, nisi equus [28] sanetur. Hic vides Deum, cum in malis et per malos operatur, mala quidem [29] fieri, Deum tamen non posse male facere, licet mala per malos faciat, quia [30] ipse bonus male facere non potest, malis tamen instrumentis utitur, quae [31] raptum et motum potentiae suae non possunt evadere. Vitium ergo est [32] in instrumentis, quae ociosa Deus esse non sinit, quod mala fiunt, movente [33] ipso Deo. Non aliter quam si faber securi serrata et dentata

Though Luther does not define in exact philosophical terms the nature of the light he speaks of, Luther's ideas again appear to reflect notions very similar to Bonaventure, who among the scholastics builds the most extensive metaphysics of light. In the thought of Bonaventure light is a form which conserves the forms of all other forms and gives them their extension and activity. Light is a principle of creation and the first form that enters into union with matter, through which the other forms are brought from passivity into being and raised above the level of sheer privation. The real (vs. formal or ideal) being of the other forms depends on the degree of their participation in that light. In themselves, created things are darkness and nothingness. Bonaventure also associates the idea of self-diffusion and self-multiplication with the concept of light. Reality can thus be seen as an effluence of light, which multiplies itself when it sheds itself further from its source and gives existence to other forms. This idea also connects the concept of light to Bonaventure's idea of the self-giving or self-diffusing nature of the highest good. Thus for Bonaventure God is the Highest Light (*summa lux*) and the only true Light (*lux*), from which other lights (*lumen*) flow. As this pure light (pure actuality and source of light), he is the highest good whose goodness flows into the creation. Furthermore, Bonaventure also calls Christ the first fount of illumination, who diffuses his light into the Creation.<sup>166</sup>

Luther's ideas concerning God as the true light, Christ as the source of light, and the reality of existence being dependent on its participation in the divine light, seem to reflect this Bonaventurian line of thought. Although a lack of exact definitions in Luther's texts makes it difficult to pinpoint the influences in a more exact manner, Luther again seems to share in the tradition building upon Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius and Bonaventure. In Neoplatonic cosmology God is portrayed as conceptual light, from which divine ideas emanate and which form the invisible substructure of the material world. In Bonaventure the light is the concept which grants the actuality to the created forms, and God is the source of this light. Luther's idea of creation on the one hand as sharing in the divine light and on the other hand as pointing to God as its origin shares the same basic structure and is undoubtedly related to the Platonic tradition in Western theology, especially through Augustinian and Bonaventurian influences. At the same time, however, there is a distinct lack of defined metaphysical thinking in Luther. Luther does in one instance mention "divine ideas"<sup>167</sup> while also criticizing concepts that are too Platonic,<sup>168</sup> but the aim of these passages is simply to argue for *creatio ex nihilo*, not to shed light on how exactly creatures subsist in the divine Wisdom. This is characteristic of Luther. He receives

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male searet. [34] Hinc fit, quod impius non possit non semper errare et peccare, quod raptu [35] divinae potentiae motus ociari non sinitur, sed velit, cupiat, faciat taliter, [36] qualis ipse est. [1] Haec rata et certa sunt, si credimus omnipotentem esse Deum, Deinde [2] impium esse creaturam Dei, aversam vero relictamque sibi sine spiritu Dei [3] non posse velle aut facere bonum. Omnipotentia Dei facit, ut impius non [4] possit motum et actionem Dei evadere, sed necessario illi subiectus paret. [5] Corruptio vero seu aversio sui a Deo facit, ut bene moveri et rapi non [6] possit. Deus suam omnipotentiam non potest omittere propter illius aversionem."

<sup>166</sup> On Bonaventure's metaphysics of light and its origins, see Guardini 1964, 18-24; 70-73; 79-84; Detloff 1989, 180-183; Cullen 2006, 48. Bonaventure distinguishes between *lux*, the source of light and light as a self-existing substantial form; and *lumen*, the light which proceeds from *lux* and illumines other things.

<sup>167</sup> WA 57, b62, 4-7: "[11, 3] **Fide** i. e. per fidem, non [5] rationem **intelligimus** cognoscimus **aptata** perfecta **esse secula verbo Dei**, [6] per verbum Dei **ut ex invisibilibus** ex ideis divinis, quia ex nihilo factus [7] est mundus **visibilia fierent**."

<sup>168</sup> WA 57, b229, 8-22.

philosophical ideas through theology and sometimes uses them for theological argumentation, but his focus of interest is on theological lines of thought.

## 2.2.4. God as Incomprehensible and Hidden

### 2.2.4.1 The Different Aspects of God's Incomprehensibility and Hiddenness

The general trend in Lutheranism has been to see Luther as positively utilizing the concept of the hidden God (*deus absconditus*), whereas Luther has been interpreted as already rejecting the concept of divine incomprehensibility (especially linked to the tradition of negative theology) early on.<sup>169</sup> But as was seen in the previous two chapters, Luther's view of the nature of God includes both the aspect of God as incomprehensible, and God as hidden, as well as (of course) God as making himself comprehensible and accessible to others. Luther's view of God as the highest good exhibits the idea of God as *superamabilis*, both exceeding the capacity of human love, yet at the same time most lovable and sharing of his goodness. Likewise Luther's view of God as light includes both the notion of inaccessible light as well as the light sharing itself with others.

In the following three subchapters I will examine Luther's notion of God as incomprehensible and of God as hidden, first in general (this chapter 2.2.4.1), then with special attention to the aspect of incomprehensibility (chapter 2.2.4.2) and finally with attention to the aspect of hiddenness (2.2.4.3). The earliest comments on God as hidden and incomprehensible already appear in the *Dictata super Psalterium*. There, in his explanation of Ps. 17, Luther lists five different interpretations of the term "darkness" as the hiding place of God:

**The hiding place** of God is **darkness**, first because he dwells in the obscurity and cloud of faith. Second, because he 'dwells in inaccessible light', so that no intellect can reach to him, unless leaving behind its own light it is elevated by higher light. Therefore blessed Dionysius teaches to enter the anagogical darkness and ascend by negation, for God is thus hidden and incomprehensible. Third, it can mean the mystery of the Incarnation, because he is hidden in humanity, which is his darkness, in which he cannot be seen, only heard.

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<sup>169</sup> See Bandt 1958, especially pages 9-18. According to Bandt, the *altprotestantische* tradition had a positive attitude toward the concept of divine incomprehensibility. T. Harnack and A. Ritschl, followed by later German scholars, were the first to interpret Luther according to the distinction *deus absconditus* – *deus revelatus*, where God as the Creator *extra Christum* was identified as the glorious, majestic, free and formidable being, set up against the gracious revelation of God in Christ. The distinction is built upon the *neuprotestantische* rejection of all metaphysical concepts. It was made possible by the removal of the distinction between the two ways to approach God: as the Creator *per viam affirmationis* / *eminentiae* (i.e. analogy), and God as the divine being in himself *per viam negationis*, as the resulting confusion does not make a distinction between these two different metaphysical approaches. Nilsson 1966, 62-63 emphasizes that Luther's concept of the hidden God contains two aspects: 1) the view of God (Gottesbild), which includes a metaphysical, non-religious and naturalistic concept of God, and 2) hiddenness, which is a result of sin. A critical review of the speculations surrounding the meaning of the concept of the *deus absconditus* is given by Leppin 2005, according to whom the concept in *de Servo arbitrio* is practical pastoral theology addressing a spiritual question, rather than one intended to be a serious theological framework concerning the relationship of God and reality or as introducing a division within the divine nature.

Fourth is the Church or the blessed Virgin, in both of whom he was hidden; and is still hidden in the Church, which is obscure to the World but manifest to God. Fifth, the sacrament of the Eucharist, where he is most hiddenly.<sup>170</sup>

The first and second senses of darkness concern the divine nature itself and its presence in faith. The third through the fifth, on the other hand, concern the presence of Christ as it relates to humanity in the incarnation, in the Church, its proclamation and the sacraments.<sup>171</sup> In the latter the divinity is hidden, but the union of the two natures is incomprehensible, thus pointing to the need to distinguish between these two aspects.<sup>172</sup> Furthermore, for Luther the divinity and humanity can be said in their different aspects to be either light or darkness. The divinity is darkness with regard to its incomprehensible essence; light, at least with regard to its power, splendor and being. The humanity is light, in that regard it makes God hidden under it accessible (in Christ, Church and preached word); darkness in that it obscures the divinity and in a certain sense protects from its brilliance.<sup>173</sup> Therefore God is at the same time both hidden and revealed. Furthermore, he is on the one hand hidden in himself or in his nature, and on the other hand he is hidden in Christ and the Church in order that he can be revealed; and thirdly, also hidden from human beings due to sin.<sup>174</sup> Both the concept of incomprehensibility and the concept of hiddenness therefore contain more than one aspect. Luther often speaks about both of

<sup>170</sup> WA 55, II, 138, 5 – 139, 2: “[5] 17, 12 **Latibulum** Dei Est **tenebre**, primo quia in fidei enygmata et caligine [6] habitat. Secundo Quia ‘habitat lucem inaccessibilem’, ita quod [7] BI 36 nullus intellectus ad eum pertingere potest, nisi suo lumine \* omisso [8] altiore leuatus fuerit. Ideo b. Dionysius docet Ingredi in tenebras anagogicas [9] et per negationem ascendere. Quia sic est Deus absconditus et [10] incomprehensibilis. Tercio potest intelligi mysterium Incarnationis. [11] Quia in humanitate absconditus latet, que est tenebre eius, in quibus [12] videri non potuit, Sed tantum audiri. Quarto Est Ecclesia vel b. [13] virgo, quia in vtraque latuit et latet in Ecclesia adhuc, que est obscura [1] mundo, Deo autem manifesta. Quinto Sacramentum Eucharistie, vbi [2] est occultissimus.”

<sup>171</sup> See Bandt 1958, 25-27 on the background of Luther’s exegesis here.

<sup>172</sup> See WA 55, II, 139, 3-9; 145, 14-16. So also Bandt 1958, 29-30.

<sup>173</sup> WA 55, II, 145, 10 – 146, 10: “[10] 17, 29 **Lucerna** primo Est ipsa humanitas Christi secundum Magistrum [11] li. 3. dis. 1., que est accensa per incarnationem diuinitatis et sparsit [12] radios bonorum operum et virtutum per totum mundum, qui erat in [13] tenebris. Et sic hanc lucernam Deus pater illuminauit, quando filium [14] misit in carnem et eum glorificauit per opera mirabilia. Quia eadem [15] humanitas est latibulum Deitatis et tenebre, quia incomprehensibiliter [16] ibi inest diuinitas. Sunt tamen illuminatę iste tenebre, Sicut lucerna, [17] scil. per opera testantia presentem diuinitatem. Secundo Lucerna Est [18] Corpus nostrum, per quod similiter relucet tanquam radiis virtus lucis, [1] que est in anima. Tercio Est ipsa ratio vel conscientia, vt ait Dominus: [2] ‘lucerna corporis tui oculus tuus est’, i. e. intentio, etc. Quarto tota [3] Ecclesia est lucerna in hoc mundo lucens impiis, vt Apost[olus] Coloss.: [4] ‘Inter quos lucetis sicut luminaria celi in medio nationis prave et perverse.’ [5] Quinto Est ipsum verbum Euangelii, quod per vocem predicantis [6] sicut lux in testa lucet et illuminat mentes hominum; vnde Iohannes, [7] qui erat figura huius vocis, Dicitur ‘lucerna lucens et ardens’ et [8] Psal. 118.: ‘lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum’. quamlibet autem [9] lucernam Deus pater illuminat. Quia Christus secundum hominem hic [10] loquitur.”

WA 55, II, 371, 419-426: “[419] 67, 15 Nota autem, Quod Supra dictum est **Zelmon** (quod vmbra vel vmbraculum [420] virtutis dicitur), hoc habet mysterium, Quia Vmbra constat ex lumine [421] et corpore: Lumen est diuinitas, Sol vrens per diem, Quia inimicitia [422] inter nos et Deum. Accessit corpus humanitatis, et facta est nubes et [423] vmbra refrigeriumque nobis. Sic ‘in protectione Dei cęli commemoramur.’ Et [424] Isaie 4.: ‘Erit vmbraculum diei et estus et Absconsum a turbine et pluuiā.’ [425] Sic Isaie 61.: ‘Solem nube tegam.’ Hec est fides, de qua Luce 1.: ‘Spiritus [426] sanctus obumbrabit tibi’ etc.”

See also WA 55, II, 805, 153-159.

<sup>174</sup> See Nilsson 1966, 58-61.

these concepts by utilizing various metaphors connected with the figures of darkness, cloud and shadow. The following excerpt from the *Operationes in Psalmos* shows one example of how they are intertwined:

‘Now’ I say, after Christ has been made the King of everything, there are two things which hinder you most so that you do not think/know right (*ne recta cognoscatis*).

First, that this Christ – who was crucified, killed and condemned by you, and on God’s authority was even cursed according to the Law of Moses – is proclaimed the Lord of Lords. It will be most difficult of all to recognize as a King one who died such a desperate and shameful death. The senses oppose fiercely, reason is horrified, experience denies it, there is no precedent. This will be complete foolishness to the Gentiles and a stumbling block to the Jews, unless you raise the mind over all this.

Second, that this king reigns in a manner that he teaches that all in which you hoped for in the law should be condemned and all which you feared be loved. He sets before you the Cross and death. He urges that visible good and evil should be despised and a far different good, ‘which the eye has not seen nor the ear has heard’ be conferred to you. You must die, if you wish to live under this king. [...]

How will anyone endure this, who leans on the senses, measures things with reason and ‘stands on the doorway of his tent’; who is unable to look at the face of Moses? Therefore intellect (*intellectus*) and education are necessary, through which you will transcend these, and despising the visible, be elevated to the invisible; not minding those which are upon earth, but those which are above, where Christ is, etc. [...]

This intellect is not that of which the philosophers opine, but it is faith itself which can see both in prosperous and adverse things that which is not visible. Therefore, not saying what it is that should be understood, he says in an absolute way: *Understand*, that is, make it so, that you would be intelligent, take care, that you would be believing. For that which faith understands has no name or form (*speciem*). Prosperity or adversity in present things completely subverts everyone who does not understand the invisible by faith. For this intellect comes from faith, according to this: ‘If you will not believe, you will not understand’, and it is entrance into that cloud in which everything that the human senses, reason, mind or intellect can comprehend is overwhelmed. For faith unites the soul with the invisible, ineffable, innominable, eternal, incogitable Word of God and at the same time separates it from all that is visible. This is the Cross and ‘passover’ of the Lord, in which he predicates this necessary intellect.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> AWA 2, 106, 18 – 108, 5: “Nunc’, inquam, postquam Christus constitutus est rex omnium <v 6>; in quo tempore duo sunt, quae vos maxime remorabuntur, ne recta cognoscatis.

Primum, quod Christus ille a vobis crucifixus, mortuus, damnatus, etiam auctore deo maledictus secundum legem Mosi, praedicatur dominus dominantium <1Tim 6,15b; Apc 19,16>. Difficillimum omnium erit agnoscere eum regem, qui tam desperata et ignominiosa morte interiit. Sensus fortiter repugnat, ratio abhorret, usus negat, exemplum deest, plane stultitia haec gentibus et Iudaeis scandalum erit <1Cor 1,23>, nisi super haec omnia mentem elevaveritis.

Secundum, quod rex iste sic regnat, ut omnia, quae in lege sperastis, contemnenda, omnia, quae timuistis, amanda doceat; crucem mortemque proponit; bona, quae videntur, et mala iuxta vilipendenda esse suadet, longe in alia vos bona eaque, ”quae nec oculus vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascenderunt” <1Cor 2,9>, vos transpositurus. Moriendum est vobis, si sub hoc rege vivere vultis; crux et odium totius mundi feranda, ignominia, pauperitas, fames, sitis, breviter: mala omnium fluctuum mundi non fugienda. Hic est enim rex, qui et ipse stultus factus est mundo et mortuus, deinde conterit suos virga ferrea et tamquam vas figuli confringit eos <v 9>.

The above quotation illustrates in a fitting manner multiple aspects of God's hiddenness and incomprehensibility in Luther's thought. According to Luther, the first difficulty in having the right cognition or knowledge of Christ is that his rule is hidden under the shameful of crucifixion. Senses oppose it, reason denies it, experience is lacking: the natural capacities of the human being do not recognize it. It is *hidden* under contraries. But this is not all: The second difficulty is that the nature of the good which Christ confers is not only in opposition to all natural and visible good, but that it is also qualitatively far different: it is the union with the eternal, ineffable, incogitable Word. It goes against both the senses and reason as well as above them: it is *incomprehensible* in its very essence. The only access to this incomprehensible Word, which God is in his very being, is faith, which separates from all the common objects of experience.

Therefore one can say in general that God is incomprehensible for Luther in at least two different aspects, and also hidden, again in at least two different aspects. First, God is *incomprehensible* in his essence, but also is so in his union with human nature. Second, God is *hidden* in his union with human nature, but also is under all lowliness and contrary form (*sub contraria specie*). As demonstrated by Luther's use of the metaphors of darkness and light, Luther can even speak of God as both hidden and knowable at the same time by the means of the same aspect: when considered from different points of view humanity is both a hiding place of God as well as a light which makes God accessible. Therefore the Incarnation and sacramentality at the same time both conceal the divinity, yet also make it accessible. There is an element of simultaneous concealment and revelation, which highlights a certain paradoxical quality of Luther's theology. The next subchapter will discuss the aspect of the incomprehensibility of God in his essence; the subchapter after that will examine the hiddenness of God under contraries. It will be argued there, that divine incomprehensibility is not an alien concept to Luther. Furthermore, it will be argued that the Lutheran concept of God as hidden under contraries is grounded on Luther's view of the divine nature. The concept of *sub contraria* does not therefore represent an antimetaphysical doctrine, but rather is founded on Luther's view of the divine nature, which itself is built on the Platonic tradition of Christianity. As such, the concept of God as incomprehensible and God as hidden are not contraries, but rather are related to each other.

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Quomodo hunc sustinebit, qui sensu nititur, qui rem ratione metitur, qui stat 'in ostio papilionis sui' <Ex 33,8>, qui faciem sui Mosi videre nequit? Ideo intellectu opus est et eruditione, quibus haec transcendatis et visibilibus contemptis in invisibilia rapiamini non sapientes ea, quae super terram, sed quae sursum sunt, ubi Christus est etc <Col 3,1>.

Proinde verbum *intelligite* in Hebraeo sonat *hascilu*, quod absoluto statu significat: *intelligites facite*, scilicet vosmetipsos - ut Hieronymus exponit - vel alios, hoc est: sic agite, hoc contendite, ut sitis intelligentes et spiritualia ac caelestia sapiatis, quod nostra vernacula dicimus: 'Seynd vveys und vorstendig', simili sententia, qua Ps 31<9>: 'Nolite fieri sicut equus et mulus, quibus non est intellectus'.

Est autem haec intelligentia, non de qua philosophi opinantur, sed fides ipsa, quae in rebus prosperis et adversis potest ea videre, quae non videntur. Ideo non exprimens, quae intelligant, absolute dicit *intelligite*, id est, facite, ut sitis intelligentes, curate, ut sitis creduli. Non enim habent nomen nequem speciem ea, qua fides intelligit. Nam praesentium rerum prosperitas vel adversitas penitus subvertit omnem hominem, qui fide non intelligit invisibilia. Hic enim intellectus ex fide venit, iuxta illud <Is 7,9>: 'Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis', et est ingressus ille caliginis, in qua absorbetur, quicquid sensus, ratio, mens intellectusque hominis comprehendere potest. Coniungit enim fides animam cum invisibili, ineffabili, innominabili, aeterno, incogitabili verbo dei simulque separat ab omnibus visibilibus, et haec est crux et 'phase' domini, in quo necessarium praedicat hunc intellectum."

#### 2.2.4.2 God as Incomprehensible

In Luther's exposition of the different meanings of darkness as God's hiding place in Ps. 17, examined in the previous subchapter, the first and second meanings of darkness postulated by Luther concern the incomprehensibility of the divine nature and union with it by faith. It is often claimed that Luther expresses the Pseudo-Dionysian idea of God's incomprehensibility in the *Dictata super Psalterium*, a *locus classicus* being the said Psalm 17, but that he gradually distances himself from it. A quite similar image of transition from cautious positive stance to full denial is embraced by most researchers. First it is noted that Luther mentions Dionysius in a positive or neutral light in two statements in the *Dictata* which discuss the nature of the darkness in which God is hidden according to the Psalms.<sup>176</sup> Second, it is noted that in the *Lectures on Romans* Luther reminds his hearers about the importance of the suffering of Christ and the purification of the eyes and the heart through the incarnate Word, before one attempts to contemplate the uncreated Word.<sup>177</sup> At this point Luther is now viewed by most researchers as departing from his initial positive estimation. Finally, Luther's references in *Operationes in Psalmos* to "cross alone" as "our theology"<sup>178</sup> and his emphasis on living, dying and being damned as the way of becoming a theologian, as opposed to speculation,<sup>179</sup> are taken as a proof of his rejection of Dionysius' negative theology. This view may then be corroborated by Luther's expressed suspicions about the true personality of Dionysius, and finally his criticism of the Angelic and Ecclesiastical hierarchies and Dionysius' Platonism are applied to lead the bull to the slaughter.<sup>180</sup> In this light it may be surprising that some of

<sup>176</sup> WA 3, 124, 30-35 = WA 55, II, 138, 6-10; WA 3, 372, 16-21 = WA 55, II, 343, 10 - 344, 16.

<sup>177</sup> WA 56, 299, 27 - 300, 3.

<sup>178</sup> AWA 2, 318, 20 - 319, 3.

<sup>179</sup> AWA 2, 294, 19 - 295, 11.

<sup>180</sup> See Vogelsang 1937, 33-37; Bandt 1958, 40-43; Oberman 1967, 24-28; Zur Mühlen 1972, 51-54, 101-104, 198-205; Peters 1985, 75-76; Blaumeiser 1995, 67; Rorem 1997; Cranz 2000, 165-167; McGinn 2002, 96-100; Hoffman 2003, 214; Rorem 2008; Cleve 2008. Loewenich 1982, 92-95 rejects the idea of Luther's mysticism without mentioning Dionysius by name. There seems to be a discrepancy in the interpretation of the nature of the difference between negative theology and the theology of the cross. Whereas the English-speaking researchers (especially Rorem, Hoffman and McGinn) tend to think that the content of the theology of the cross is the idea of knowing God in Christ the Crucified (stressing the Incarnation and history of Christ), German researchers (especially Vogelsang, Zur Mühlen, Loewenich and Blaumeiser) tend to understand the cross as signifying the way God works by means of suffering, realised in the (existential struggles of) Christian life. Both stress the concrete and the historical as the focus of Reformation theology.

Somewhat different approaches appear in Laats, Cranz and Alfsvåg. Laats 1999 attempts to systematically analyse the relationship of Luther's *deus absconditus* and Pseudo-Dionysius' *Mystical Theology*, but bases his examination of Luther only on the *Heidelberg disputation* and the *De servo arbitrio*, thus omitting Luther's writings which deal explicitly with Dionysius and which exhibit the most influence of negative theology. Cranz 2000, 165-167 agrees that Luther's concept of the *deus absconditus* is ultimately inspired by Dionysius. Alfsvåg 2010, 177-259 presents a careful textual analysis of the *Heidelberg disputation* and *Operationes* as well as the later *Anti-Latomus* disputation and *De servo arbitrio*. He does not, however, take a stance on the question of Luther's ontology (relational vs. real-ontic, see p. 200-201), which means that he does not analyse thoroughly the nature of the objects of faith. And yet it is exactly here, in the definition of the divine nature, where Luther's closest conformity with negative theology can be seen. For example Alfsvåg describes faith with reference to AWA 2, 107, 24-25 "non enim habet nomen neque speciem ea, quae fides intelligit" "as void of any content" (p. 206-207), because he does not notice that the object of faith is God in his divine nature, not "void of any content", but void of conceptual content. Its object is divine presence, not "an absence without name and form", as Alfsvåg claims.

the lengthiest texts describing the incomprehensibility of the divine nature in terms of negative theology are actually found precisely in the *Operationes in Psalmos*, the work which, according to the repeated narrative, cements Luther's break with mystical theology.

When we consider Luther's view of the divine nature, it is noteworthy that Luther connects the concept of incomprehensibility especially with what he calls "the highest divinity" or "the summit of divinity" (*summa divinitate*), a term which refers to the divine nature itself. The concept is used first in the *Dictata* in connection with Ps. 17:7:

**And he heard me from his holy temple** from the highest divinity or the dwelling place of angels [...] **and fire** i.e., zeal and anger **from his face** cognition the present God **flared** against sin: **coals were set burning by him** i.e., dead, black and frigid sinners, before they are set on fire by charity and made alive. **He bent** set down or humiliated **the skies** apostles and disciples **and descended** by effect, 'giving to humble his grace' and knowledge: **and cloud blindness was under his feet** in impious Jews and other unbelievers 'who mind earthly things' and [they who are not his seat, as the skies] are set as a footstool of his feet. **And then he ascended** is recognized to be superior **over the Cherubim** over all intellect and fullness of knowledge **and flew** i.e., is made more and more high: **he flew over wings** all virtues of winds spirits, heavenly and human. **And he made darkness his hiding place** i.e., he is made incomprehensible [so that he cannot be reached, 'dwelling in inaccessible light'], or is hidden in faith and is seen through the darkness of the intellect [through negations]<sup>181</sup>

Luther's exegesis of the text takes as its starting point the concept of "highest divinity" (*summa divinitate*). From there God descends in effect, giving to the humble his grace. However, unbelievers turned towards earthly things remain in blindness. But after God has descended in the believers (i.e., given them grace and knowledge of him), according to Luther he then ascends, as he is recognized as "superior over the Cherubim": by this Luther means that he is above all intellect and fullness of knowledge (which the Cherubim represent), and the ascent refers to this act of recognition itself. Therefore Luther concludes (citing the Psalm), that "he made darkness his hiding place", that is, God is made incomprehensible: either unreachable as in accordance with 1. Tim. 6:16, "dwelling in the inaccessible light"; or hidden in faith, only seen through the darkness of the intellect or negations.

Luther's emphasis in the text is on the divine infinity. When through grace God becomes the object of knowledge, the more he is known, the higher he always becomes, so that he never is fully reached. Luther describes this infinite "ascent" of God in two texts of

<sup>181</sup> WA 55, I, 134, 9 – 138, 8: "[9] **Et exaudiuit de templo sancto suo**<sup>8</sup> de summa diuinitate vel de [10] angelorum habitaculo [...] / **et ignis** i. e. zelus et [8] indignatio **a facie eius** cognitione Dei presentis<sup>12</sup> **exarsit** contra peccatum: [9] **carbones succensi sunt ab eo** i. e. mortui, nigri et frigidi peccatores prius [10] iam inflammati sunt charitate et viuificati. [17, 10] **Inclinauit** demisit vel [11] humiliavit **caelos** apostolos et discipulos<sup>13</sup> **et descendit** per effectum, 'dando [12] humilibus gratiam' et cognitionem sui: **et caligo** cecitas **sub pedibus eius** [13] in Impiis Iudeis et aliis incredulis, 'qui terrena sapiunt' et [non sunt sedes [1] eius vt celi] positi sunt Scabellum pedum eius<sup>14</sup>. [17, 11] **Et tunc ascendit** [2] agnitus est esse superior **super Cherubin** super omnem intelligentiam et [3] scientie plenitudinem **et volauit**<sup>15</sup> i. e. magis ac magis sublimis [factus] [4] est: **volauit super pennas** omnes virtutes **ventorum** spirituum tam celestium [5] quam humanorum. [17, 12] **Et posuit tenebras latibulum suum** i. e. [6] factus est incomprehensibilis [ita quod attingi non potest, 'habitans [7] lucem inaccessibilem'], vel in fide latet et videtur per tenebras intellectus [8] [per negationes]."



the *Dictata*. The first is a gloss on the word “he flew” (*volavit*) of the above text, which reads:

Gloss 15) ‘Ascends’, ‘flies’, ‘to descend’, ‘to ascend’, ‘to fly’ are all said of God not regarding the form/substance, but of the effect (*non formaliter, sed effectiue*). Through these namely the incomprehensibility of the divinity is expressed, which the ecstatic and contemplative see, as the Apostle says Rom. 11: ‘O highness’ etc. Because as flying we cannot be caught by pursuit, so God is above and become incomprehensible to everyone who contemplates and looks up to the sky of the divinity.<sup>182</sup>

Another text with practically the same content can be found in the *Dictata* in connection with verse 11 of the same Psalm (Ps. 17:11), which contains also the term *superamabilis* that was already referred to in the discussion above:

**He ascends over the Cherubim.** God ‘ascends’ not in his nature but in our cognition and love, when he is known to be the most high, most incomprehensible and lovable over everything [*superamabilis*]. And the more we progress in knowing him, the more he ‘ascends’, because his highness is always known more and more clearly. [...] Therefore ‘Cherubim’ signify these cognitive powers, over all which God ‘ascends’ in the humble.

**Wings of winds** on the other hand properly signify the affective virtues. And so he ‘flies’. Therefore he is not said to ‘ascend’ over them but to ‘fly’, because he is loved only to that degree as to which he is known. He does not ‘fly’, i.e., is not loved higher than he ‘ascends’, i.e., is known. Therefore ‘flight’ means that he is the object of love, ‘ascent’ means that he is the object of knowing. But he does not ascend in his nature, but in our knowledge of him, does not fly in his nature, but in our affect and love of him. [...] And so, when [the Psalmist] said ‘flies’, he advisedly added ‘flies over wings’, so that you would understand that God does not fly or ascend absolutely, but that those who love him fly, and he nevertheless is always above them [and is more than can be comprehended].<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> WA 55, I, 138 gloss 15, 12-17: “GLOSSA:<sup>15</sup>) [12] ‘Ascendit’, ‘volat’, ‘Descendere’, ‘Ascendere’, ‘volare’ omnia de [13] Deo dicuntur non formaliter, Sed effectiue. Exprimunt enim in hiis [14] incomprehensibilitas diuinitatis, quam vident extatici et contemplatiui, [15] vt apostolus Ro. XI.: ‘o altitudo’ etc. Quia sicut Volantes nos nequimus [16] consequi, apprehendere, Sic Deus supereminet et incomprehensibilis fit [17] omni contemplanti et sursum spectanti in celum diuinitatis.”

<sup>183</sup> WA 55, II, 137, 2 – 138, 4: “**Et Ascendit super Cherubin.** Deus ‘Ascendit’ [3] non in natura, Sed in nostra cognitione et amore, quando cognoscitur [4] esse altissimus et incomprehensibilis et superamabilis. Et sic quanto magis [5] proficimus in cognitione eius, tanto magis ‘ascendit’, quia semper clarius [6] ac clarius cognoscitur eius altitudo. Sed hoc ‘ascendere’ non contingit, [7] nisi vbi prius ‘descenderit’, Sicut Christus prius descendit et postea [8] ascendit. Quia ‘nemo ascendit in celum, nisi qui descendit’, i. e. nemo [9] peruenit ad diuinitatis cognitionem, nisi qui prius humiliatus fuerit [10] et in sui cognitionem descenderit, simul enim ibi et Dei cognitionem [11] inuenit. Vnde ‘Cherubim’ significat hic cognituias potentias, [12] super qua omnes ‘ascendit’ Deus in humilibus. **Penne** [13] **ventorum** autem significat proprie affectuias virtutes. Et sic ‘volat’. [14] Vnde super eas non dicitur ‘ascendere’, Sed ‘volare’, quia tantum manet [15] amabilis, quantum cognoscitur. Non enim altius ‘volat’, i. e. amatur, [16] quam ‘ascendit’, i. e. cognoscitur. Igitur ‘volatus’ eius est ipsum esse [17] obiectum Dilectionis, ‘Ascensus’ autem eius est ipsum esse obiectum [18] cognitionis. Ascendit non natura, Sed cognitione sui nostra, volat non [19] natura, Sed affectu et amore sui nostro. [‘Volat’, i. e. in volatu sanctorum [20] est et amatur. ‘Ascendit’, i. e. in proficiscenti cognitione ipse est [21] vel ... Volatus enim significat raptus, Iubilos et affectus diligentium et [1] deuotorum spirituum. Vel est o ...]] Et notanter cum dixisset ‘Volauit’, [2] addit ‘volauit super pennas’, vt intelligas,

Both texts express very clearly the idea, that even when God becomes the object of knowledge or love, he nevertheless remains above the cognitive capacities (i.e., intellect and affect), is touched by them, but is “more than can be comprehended”. On the one hand, this expresses Luther’s idea that Christian perfection is never attained in this life, only in the future.<sup>184</sup> On the other hand, it is related to the nature of God as something that exceeds human cognitive capacities. The image of the two Cherubim, which Luther uses in both passages, is used in the mystical tradition by Richard of St. Victor as the image of the contemplation of the paradoxical Trinitarian doctrines and of the contemplation of the similitude and the dissimilitude of God to rational concepts. Bonaventure uses the image of the Cherubim as an image of the contemplation of the incomprehensible union of humanity and divinity in Christ. For both teachers, the Cherubim thus represent the contemplation of the incomprehensible aspects of God.<sup>185</sup> Therefore Luther’s exegesis of the Psalm 17 in the *Dictata* is clearly related to the tradition of mystical theology. This can also be seen in the sections of the texts which concern the means of knowing God. On the one hand, Luther refers to the hiddenness of God in faith, on the other hand, to the darkness of the intellect and negations.<sup>186</sup> Speaking of the “ecstatic and contemplative”, who look up to the sky of the divinity, Luther even hints here of the speculative method of negative theology, which strives to grasp the divine experientially by the means of negations in the intellect. The more familiar idea of God being present in faith in a hidden manner is contained in the text as well. Both of these themes are united, however, by the consideration that when God becomes the object of knowledge, he remains incomprehensible, above the cognitive capacities of the human person.

The concept of divine incomprehensibility is also connected to the concept of tribulations or afflictions (*tentationes, Anfechtungen*).<sup>187</sup> Luther gives one of his most profound treatments of the incomprehensibility of the divine nature in his explanation of Ps 3:5 in the *Operationes in Psalmos*, precisely the work which purportedly marks Luther’s departure from the idea. Here again it is linked with the same concept of the “highest divinity” or the “summit of divinity” (*summae divinitatis*). The context of the text is the tribulations of Christ. Luther interprets the verse of the Psalm as Christ’s cry to the Father in the midst of his Passion:

He says *from his holy mountain*. I see that this mountain is understood in different ways. Some think it means Christ receiving help from himself, others from the highest divinity. I’m pleased with ‘the mountain of the highest divinity’, because – as I imagine – you can see this mountain has no name. For Ps. 2, ‘On Zion, my holy Mountain’, says that someone constituted over someone is a king. Therefore that mountain had to be named, because he could not rule it if it were not known. But here that from which he is ruled and heard cannot be named, having no name or form.

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quia non absolute [3] in se volat, nec ascendit, Sed quia amantes eum volant, et super eos [4] tamen adhuc est semper [et plus quam comprehendere possint].”

<sup>184</sup> See WA 57, b214, 13 – b215, 1, especially lines b214, 29 – b215, 1.

<sup>185</sup> See *Benjamin major*, book IV chapters I; III; VIII; XVII-XX; *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* VI, 4-6. The background of Luther’s use of the image of the Cherubim in Richard and Bonaventure is also examined on pp. 69-70 of the present study.

<sup>186</sup> On Luther’s use of the image of the Cherubim in connection with the presence of Christ in faith, see p. 197-198.

<sup>187</sup> On the difficulty of translating this term, see Scaer 1983, 15-13.

This seems to me to teach us all to hope in the time of tribulation for a divine help from above, the mode, time and kind of which should be unknown to us, so that there would be place for faith and hope, which depend on that which is not seen, not heard and has not entered the heart of man. So the eye of faith looks up to the interior darkness and the cloud on the mountain but does not see anything, except that it is weakened while gazing on high and waiting, whence its help shall come. It looks to the heights and expects a helper from the heights, but what these heights and the forthcoming help is, it does not know. Even if Christ knew everything, he was still tested in all things like us for our sake, so that even for him this mountain was according to his humanity in some way unknown and incomprehensible in the hour of his Passion. This is what Ps. 21 means when it says: "But you dwell in holiness", that is, in hiddenness and in inaccessible seclusion. As God is ineffable, incomprehensible and inaccessible, so is his will and help, especially in the time of abandonment.

Therefore if faith tested by tribulation does not give this by experience, no words can relate what *this holy mountain of God* is. It is the same thing when he said '*He heard me from his holy mountain*' which is said in everyday language: He heard me in an ineffable and incomprehensible way that I would never have imagined. I know I have been heard from above, but I don't know how. He grasped me from above and took me to the heights (as is said elsewhere), but I do not know what this height, this summit, this mountain is. [...] This is what the word '*holy*' means, that it is above expression, separate and secret, distinctly that which cannot be reached by senses or by mind; who is carried off there is carried off to the invisible God, purified, separated and sanctified perfectly. This is truly hard and intolerable to human nature, if the Spirit of Lord does not carry over these waters and kindle the darknesses of this abyss, so that there be light.<sup>188</sup>

In the text Luther uses a number of different expressions in his discussion of the reasons for the incomprehensibility of the nature of God. Here he converges even more

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<sup>188</sup> AWA 2, 139, 7 - 140, 26: "*De monte sancto suo* inquit. Hunc montem varie intelligi video. Aliis ipse Christus de seipso exauditus intelligitur, aliis de summa divinitate. Placet mihi mons summae divinitatis, modo id - quantum somnio - observes monti huic non esse nomen. Nam Ps. 2<,6> "Montem sanctum Zion" dixit, super quem tamquam inferiorem constitutus esset rex. Ideo nominandus erat illic mons, ut quem regere non posset, nisi nosset. Hic vero, a quo regitur et de quo exauditur, innominabilis est, nec speciem nec nomen habens. Quo mihi videor erudiri nos omnes in tempore tentationis auxilium divinum sperare quidem debere desursum, sed modum, tempus et genus auxilii nobis esse incognitum, ut fidei et spei locus sit, quae nituntur in ea, quae nec videntur nec audiuntur nec in cor hominis ascendunt <1Cor 2,9>. Atque ita oculus fidei in tenebras interiores et caliginem montis suspicit, nihilque videt, nisi quod attenuatur suspiciens in excelso exspectansque, unde veniat auxilium ei. In sublime videt et de sublimi exspectat adiutorem; sed quale sit hoc sublime, et quale auditorium futurum, ignorat. Etsi enim Christus omnia sciebat, tamen tentatus est in similitudine in omnia pro nobis <Hebr 4,15>, ut et ipse hunc montem quammodo iuxta humanitatem habuerit ignotum et incomprehensibilem pro hora passionis, quod et alio Ps. 21<,4> significat dicens: "Tu autem in sancto habitas", id est, in abscondito et inaccessu secreto. Sicut enim / deus est ineffabilis, incomprehensibilis, inaccessibilis, ita eius voluntas et auxilium praesertim in tempore derelictionis.

Ideo nisi fides hic expertum reddat et tentatio probatum, nullis verbis tradi potest, quid sit *mons iste sanctus dei*. Idem ergo est, ac si diceret: *Exaudivit me de monte sancto suo*, quod vulgo dicitur: Exaudivit me ineffabili incomprehensibilique modo, quam nunquam cogitasset. Desursum scio me exauditus, sed quo modo, ignoro. Eripuit me de alto et de summo accepit me (ut alibi dicit), sed non cognosco, quid sit hoc altum, hoc summum, hic mons. [...]

Hoc est, quod vocabulum illud *sancto* indicat, quod, ut supra dictum est, separatum et secretum significat planeque id, quod attingi nec sensu nec mente potest; in quod qui rapitur, in deum invisibilem rapitur ac perfectissime purificatur, separatur, sanctificatur. Verum dura haec res humanae naturae et intolerabilis, nisi spiritus domini feratur super haec aquas et tenebras huius abyssi foveat, donec lux fiat <Gen 1,2s>."

closely with the tradition of Negative theology. The text contains numerous thematic and verbal affinities with Pseudo-Dionysius' famous treatise *De mystica theologia* and with the extensive mystical tradition based upon it. First, there are the general images of the mountain, the cloud and darkness in which God is hidden. Dionysius uses the image of the summit and the cloud in his treatise as images of the divine nature.<sup>189</sup> Gerson also uses the same image, combining it with Dionysian themes and connecting it with the concept of an eye that is obscured by a cloud. However, for Gerson the onlooker is not beneath the mountain, but on top of it – in a similar manner as in Dionysius. The cloud describes in both their work the experience of a person who has left behind created things (which Gerson refers to as lower darknesses), but to whom God is veiled in the superior darkness of incomprehensibility.<sup>190</sup> Thus Luther's use of the image contains elements from the tradition of apophatic mysticism. It is, however, also modified to correspond to his understanding of divine monergy. Luther does not present a way to ascend to the mountain, like Dionysius does. For Luther this is possible only when God first descends.<sup>191</sup> Likewise, Luther speaks of the eye of faith looking to the heights and awaiting help from above, not standing on top of the mountain and looking to the cloud above. But the overall picture (the mountain as the divine nature, the cloud as the divine incomprehensibility, the eye of faith) is taken from the tradition. To continue the analysis of Luther's discussion: when looking to the cloud and heights of the mountain the person sees nothing but is himself being weakened (*nisi quod attenuatur suspiciens in excelso*). Dionysius for his part speaks in his tractate "of the most high places above which God is present", and about the ascent to this mountain as "decreasing" or "reduction" before complete silence.<sup>192</sup> According to Luther the person in tribulations does not see anything nor knows what the help will be (*quale sit hoc sublime, et quale auditorium futurum, ignorat*). Its mode, time and kind is unknown (*incognitum*). Dionysius in turn speaks about the cloud of unknowing (*caliginem ... incognoscibilitatis*) which surrounds God and has to be entered to reach God.<sup>193</sup> And just as for Dionysius the experiential knowledge of God is grasped in mystical union, as well for Luther the help is the *raptus* and *accessus* to the Godhead itself. The person grasped by God will know and experience that he is helped, but cannot know or express what the help and the divine nature is (*Scio me axauditum, sed quo modo, ignoro*). He does not know what the divine summit and height is (*non cognosco... quid sit hoc altum*). Dionysius for his part speaks about knowing by not-knowing (*nihil cognoscit, supra mentem cognoscens*).<sup>194</sup> Therefore we can see in Luther a combination of a variety of mystical themes taken from the tradition of negative theology, probably appropriated through Bonaventure, Gerson, and possibly Tauler.

Also noteworthy are Luther's terms for and his notions of the divinity. According to Luther the mountain in the Psalm should be interpreted as a figure of the highest divinity precisely because it has no name. In accordance with this notion of negative theology

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<sup>189</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius: *De mystica theologia* I, 1; 3 (PG 3, 998-1002). The latin translations of Dionysius used here are from Patrologia Graeca.

<sup>190</sup> See Gerson: *Tractatus septimus super Magnificat*, De experimentalis unionis Veritates (DP IV, 343-344).

<sup>191</sup> See WA 55, I, 138, gloss 15 17-18; WA 55, II, 804, 144 – 805, 153; AWA 2, 27-30.

<sup>192</sup> *De mystica theologia* I, 3; III (PG 3, 999; 1034).

<sup>193</sup> *De mystica theologia* I, 1 (PG 3, 998).

<sup>194</sup> *De mystica theologia* I, 6 (PG 3, 1002).

Luther writes that the divine nature cannot be named, and has no species (*innominabilis, nec speciem nec nomen habens*). For Luther, God is above expression (*supra dictum*), ineffable, incomprehensible and inaccessible. He cannot be reached by either the senses or the mind (*attingi nec sensu nec mente potest*). For Luther the human folly in the face of the tribulations lies precisely in that the human being wishes to give a name to this mountain and desecrate it with human thoughts instead of waiting for divine help. In doing so, the human being expresses that he or she does not have faith and trust in God, but only follows God up to the point where reason can lead.<sup>195</sup> Luther's reflections on the unnameability of the divine nature echo Dionysius' *De divinis nominibus*, a work with which Luther also demonstrates familiarity.<sup>196</sup> However, one must note that for Luther it is precisely the divine essence that has no name: God as Trinity as well as the divine persons can be named.<sup>197</sup> Similar attributions can also be found in other texts. In relation to Ps. 2:10, which we examined above, Luther described the object of faith as something that has neither name nor species.<sup>198</sup> The union with the "invisible, ineffable, innominable, eternal, incogitable Word of God" is described as "entering into that cloud, in which everything that the human senses, reason, mind or intellect can comprehend is overwhelmed".<sup>199</sup> The concept of the cloud which the senses and reason cannot penetrate is the same figure originating from Dionysius and used by Bonaventure, Gerson and others. Even Luther himself states in the *Operationes in Psalmos* that he is aware of Dionysius' use of the cloud figure. Luther's use of the image, however, does not necessarily mean that he understands its content in exactly the same way as Dionysius. Rather, Luther expresses both familiarity with as well as criticism of Dionysius' interpretation.<sup>200</sup>

How then are Luther's texts concerning divine incomprehensibility to be understood? When one examines Luther's texts dealing with the tribulations, two different aspects of divine incomprehensibility come to the fore. The first of these is what one could call the metaphysical *essence* or *nature* of God, whereby God differs from all created things. In this respect, God is incomprehensible by virtue of being invisible, ungraspable by the

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<sup>195</sup> AWA 2, 140, 27-32: "Proinde tota stultitia est in hac re, quod homo non sustinet consilium dei, sed adiuvari petit modo et tempore a se electo et sibi placito, quo ex innominabili monte nominatum sibi facit et sanctum dei montem suae cogitationis tactu prophanat, quantum in eo est. Hic est sicut equus et mulus, qui eo usque dominum sustinet, quousque sentit aut capit, ultra captum suum non sequitur, quia fide non vivit, sed ratione sua."

<sup>196</sup> AWA 2, 340, 3-6: "Et quid, si totum huc Dionysium de divinis nominibus advehamus? Et eundem rursus de mystica theologia, donec nullum nomen deo relinquamus? Siquidem qui cogitatu incomprehensibilis est, quo nomine effabilis esse queat?"

<sup>197</sup> See e.g. Luther's excursus on de nomine dei, AWA 2, 333-345.

<sup>198</sup> AWA 2, 107, 23-24: "Non enim habent nomen neque speciem ea, quae fides intelligit." See the longer quote and its analysis on p. 58.

<sup>199</sup> AWA 2, 108, 1-4: "et est ingressus ille caliginis, in qua absorbetur, quicquid sensus, ratio, mens intellectusque hominis comprehendere potest. Coniungit enim fides animam cum invisibili, ineffabili, innominabili, aeterno, incogitabili verbo dei simulque separat ab omnibus visibilibus"

<sup>200</sup> See WA 5, 503, 4-34 where Luther expresses his familiarity with Dionysius' use of the cloud image while at the same time rejecting its application to the verse discussed in that text. In it Luther rather interprets the cloud as signifying God's hidden work under contraries. However, with regard to the fact that Luther uses the cloud also to signify the human inability to grasp the action of God, Luther's interpretation is not completely different from the original Dionysian idea of incomprehensibility.

senses and reason as well as “most high” (*altissimus*).<sup>201</sup> This is connected to God being unnameable and having no species: There is no real (as opposite to nominal) concept for God by which God in his essence can be grasped and understood. The incomprehensibility of the Godhead might also be connected to the idea of the divine plenitude: the divine nature as the unity which includes in itself the plurality of all concepts (Lat. *species*) and transcends them. However, Luther nowhere explicitly states this idea. A hint that might point to a more philosophical conception of the essence of God on Luther’s part are some mentions of the *via negationis* in the *Dictata*, but the issue is not further elaborated.<sup>202</sup> On the contrary, Luther later in the *Operationes* rejects the speculative interpretation of negative theology, replacing it with a focus on spiritual experience. True negation is experienced in spiritual tribulation.<sup>203</sup> Therefore the sentence “*nec ... speciem habens*”, the point that God has no *species* seems to refer to the invisibility of God rather than to God as the unity surpassing concepts: God simply has no *species visibilis*, i.e., visible form or

<sup>201</sup> WA 57, b144, 4-12: “Ipse enim est altissimus, ideo et altissimum opus eius, [5] ut patet per singula exempla exitus filiorum Israel. Et ex hoc nunc [6] intelliguntur, qui sint exacerbatores, irritatores, exasperatores, contradictores, [7] sicut Scriptura sepius vocat, scil. increduli verbo Dei et impacientes [8] operis Dei, dum sicut equus et mulus tam diu sequuntur [9] dominum, quamdiu sentiant apparentes res, quibus nitantur, que si [10] ruant, ruunt et ipsi. Ideo arduissima res est fides Christi, quia est raptus et [11] translatio ab omnibus, que sentit intus et foris, in ea, que nec intus nec [12] foris sentit, scil. in invisibilem, altissimum, incomprehensibilem Deum.”

WA 57, b214, 23 – b215, 7: “Haec autem bona divina cum sint invisibilia, incomprehensibilia [24] et penitus abscondita, ideo natura non potest ea attingere aut diligere, [25] nisi per gratiam Dei elevetur. Eadem ratione etiam fit, ut spiritualis [26] homo a nemine iudicari, cognosci, videri, nec a se ipso quidem [27] possit, quia haeret in tenebris altissimis Dei. Quod David edoctus [28] testatur dicens 30. ps.: ‘Abscondes eos in abscondito faciei tuae’ (id est [29] in abscondito, quod est coram te). Hoc incipit quidem in hac vita, sed [1] perficietur in futura. Magna itaque res est esse Christianum et vitam [2] suam habere absconditam non in loco aliquo, ut eremita, nec in corde [3] suo, quod est profundissimum, sed in ipso invisibili Deo, scilicet inter res [4] mundi vivere et pasci eo, quod nusquam apparet nisi modico verbi [5] indicio soloque auditu, ut Christus Matth. 4. dicit: ‘Non in solo pane vivit [6] homo, sed in omni verbo.’ Sic sponsus in Cant.: ‘Ego dormio’ (quia [7] res visibiles non advertit), ‘et cor meum vigilat’.”

AWA 2, 140, 10-13: “Exaudivit me ineffabili incomprehensibilique modo, quam nunquam cogitasset. Desursum scio me exauditus, sed quo modo, ignoro. Eripuit me de alto et de summo accepit me (ut alibi dicit), sed non cognosco, quid sit hoc altum, hoc summum, hic mons.”

AWA 2, 318, 5 – 319, 1: “Denique ceterae virtutes versantur circa res crassas et corporales externe, illae vero circa purum verbum dei interne, quo capitur et non capit anima, hoc est, exiit tunica et calciamentis suis, ab omnibus tam rebus quam phantasmatis [V 4] rapiunturque per verbum (cui adhaeret, immo quod eam apprehendit et ducit mirabiliter) ‘in solitudinem’ (ut Osee 2<,14> dicit), in invisibilia, in cubiculum suum, ‘in cellam vinariam’ <Cant 2,4>. At hic ductus, hic raptus, hic expositio misere eam discruciat. Arduum est enim et angusta via relinquere omnia visibilia, exui omnibus sensibus, educi ex consuetis, denique hoc mori est et ad inferos descendere. Videtur enim ipsa sibi funditus perire, dum subtractis omnibus, in quibus stetit, versabatur, haerebat, nec terram tangit nec caelum, nec se sentit nec deum dicens <Cant 5,8>: Nuntiate dilecto meo, ‘quia amore langueo’, quasi dicat: Redacta sum in nihilum et nescivi, in tenebras et caliginem ingressa nihil video; fide, spe et caritate sola vivo et infirmor (id est, patior), ‘cum enim infirmor, tunc fortior sum’ <2Cor 12,10b>. Hunc ductum theologi mystici vocant ‘un tenebras ire’, ‘ascendere super ens et non ens’.”

<sup>202</sup> WA 55, I, 138: “Et posuit tenebras latibulum suum i. e. [6] factus est incomprehensibilis [ita quod attingi non potest, ‘habitans [7] lucem inaccessibilem’], vel in fide latet et videtur per tenebras intellectus [8] [per negationes].”

WA 55, II, 138, 5-10: “[5] 17, 12 Latibulum Dei Est tenebre, primo quia in fidei enygmata et caligine [6] habitat. Secundo Quia ‘habitat lucem inaccessibilem’, ita quod [7] BI 36 nullus intellectus ad eum pertingere potest, nisi suo lumine \* omisso [8] altiore leuatus fuerit. Ideo b. Dionysius docet Ingredi in tenebras anagogicas [9] et per negationem ascendere. Quia sic est Deus absconditus et [10] incomprehensibilis.”

<sup>203</sup> AWA 2, 294, 19 – 300, 11.

concept derived from sensual experience, and therefore cannot be grasped by the senses or reason.<sup>204</sup> Furthermore, the idea that God has no *species* may be related to the idea of God as infinite being, whereas mental concepts and the capacity of the intellect are finite. Thus Luther's focus would lie not on the superconceptual unity of God (as in the Dionysian tradition), but rather on the infinity of the divine nature, which the intellect cannot grasp in its entirety. Luther's statements about God flying above the fullness of knowledge and always rising higher when he is known more seem to corroborate this interpretation.<sup>205</sup> One should note, however, that Luther's view is that the abstract (that is, non-empirical) concept of God (*notitia* or *notio divinitatis*) as well as God's individual attributes, such as the invisibility, immortality, power, goodness and righteousness, are in principle knowable to human beings even naturally. This remaining natural cognition of God is contained in the human heart. The fallen person, nevertheless, cannot attribute it to the right 'subject', i.e., to the true God as he is in his concrete (empirical) nature. This concrete knowledge of God (*vera notitia de vera essentia*), i.e., the specific knowledge of who God is and where he can be found, has been lost and perverted in the Fall. Luther states that this loss has taken place because human beings have ascribed the notion of divinity to objects of their choice, thus falling into idolatry, instead of having left the divinity "naked" (that is, incomprehensible and unexplainable except by God's self-revelation) and worshipping him as such.<sup>206</sup> The focus in Luther's reception of negative theology is therefore unquestionably on the experiential nature of mystical theology, not on the speculative. Especially in the latter texts of the researched period, Luther seems to discard those aspects of negative theology upon which a way to ascend to cognition of God through negations or speculations of conceptual nature could be built. Luther's criticism of Pseudo-Dionysian Platonism should be understood in this sense: as a rejection of contemplation of God by the means of conceptual negation or affirmation. For Luther, it is central that God cannot be reached by any normal human means of cognition, only through faith. The rejection does not, however, include the rejection of an ontological concept of God which can be theologically described in terms of negative theology, though not actually grasped through them, or a rejection of the experiential nature of mystical theology.<sup>207</sup> It is rather that these are the two aspects Luther retains, demonstrated

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<sup>204</sup> AWA 2, 294, 1-9.

<sup>205</sup> See WA 55, I 134, 9 – 138, 8; 138 gloss 15; WA 55, II, 137, 2 – 138, 4. See also chapters 2.2.2 and 3.3.1.2.

<sup>206</sup> WA 56, 11, 1 -15, 4; 176, 15 – 177, 18. Luther's teaching here seems to follow the same format as his instructions to those in tribulation: The error and idolatry lies in replacing divinity with self-conceived images of God, instead of waiting for divine help and giving glory to God regardless of subjective experience. On the natural knowledge of God as a component of practical syllogism on Luther see also Raunio 2001, 167-170. On natural knowledge of God and natural law in general as well as their limitations see Wright 2010, 126-131.

<sup>207</sup> This rejection seems to imply the rejection of the Platonic idea of God as the unity of ideas (concepts). This does not, however, mean the rejection of an *ontological* concept of God, as we can observe from Luther's texts regarding the divine nature. It rather seems that Luther understands the incomprehensibility of God in a more radical manner than Pseudo-Dionysian Neoplatonism. To clarify Luther's position on this issue one would have to be able to define the metaphysical relationship between divine nature and concepts in Luther's thought: Are they equal with it, or distinct from it? Are there any real concepts? Behind Luther's distinction between the abstract concept (*notio divinitatis*) and the concrete essence (*notitia de vera essentia*) of God may lie the nominalist distinction between abstract and intuitive knowledge. An abstractive concept of God could therefore be conceptually accurate, but could not serve a

by his numerous allusions to mystical writings in texts concerning the union with God. God as the invisible highest good is in his nature such that the spiritual experience of rapture and union with him cannot be sensed, comprehended, expressed or even experienced in a any normal manner.<sup>208</sup> However, the union still seems to be an ‘experience’ of its own quality, of which one who has had such spiritual experience can speak afterwards.<sup>209</sup> Luther’s reception of negative theology therefore seems to be a re-interpretation rather than a rejection, which is illustrated by the frequent appearances of mystical terminology and images in Luther’s writings of the period.

But there is also a second aspect of incomprehensibility which appears in Luther’s texts on the tribulations: the *will* of God. Not only is God incomprehensible in his essence, but his will as well is hidden and secret and should remain so. According to Luther, to seek to know the will of God, especially concerning predestination, is to seek to be like God. The incomprehensibility of the will is connected to the absence of visible and sensible good and consolation in the tribulations, and with the resulting temptation to call God evil and unjust. Luther stresses that in the middle of suffering one should conform to the will of God whether one knows it or not.<sup>210</sup> The emphasis on the hidden will of God

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conceptual ascent to the knowledge of God, as, unlike in the Platonic system, there is not an ontological link between the concepts and the essence of God. Luther’s rejection of the idea of speculative ascent might, however, also be due to his understanding of the limitations of the natural cognitive capacities of the human being (see chapter 2.4.1). Luther’s position might be thus, that the concepts derived from sense experience are simply not suitable for understanding God, whereas the concepts derived from illumination by faith are concepts ontologically subsisting in the divine nature. This would mean that Luther would not reject the Platonic idea of the nature of God *per se*, but that for him the access to real concepts would only be attained in the illumination of faith, which would also render the idea of an ascent by natural means impossible. The texts considered here do not allow for a definite conclusion.

<sup>208</sup> WA 56, 307, 4-11: “[4] ‘Charitas Dei’ dicitur, Quia per eam solum Deum diligimus, [5] Vbi Nihil visibile, nihil experimentale nec intus nec foris est, in quod [6] confidatur aut quod ametur aut timeatur, Sed super omnia In Inuisibilem [7] Deum et inexperimentalem, incomprehensibilem, scil. in medias [8] tenebras interiores rapitur, nesciens, quid amet, Sciens autem, [9] quid non amet, et omne cognitum et expertum fastidians [10] Et id, quod nondum cognoscit, tantum desiderans, dicens: ‘Quia amore [11] Languo’, i. e. quod habeo, nolo, et quod volo, non habeo.”

AWA 2, 107, 23 – 108, 4: “Non enim habent nomen nequem speciem ea, qua fides intelligit. Nam praesentium rerum prosperitas vel adversitas penitus subvertit omnem hominem, qui fide non intelligit invisibilia. Hic enim intellectus ex fide venit, iuxta illud <Is 7,9>: ‘Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis’, et est ingressus ille caliginis, in qua absorbetur, quicquid sensus, ratio, mens intellectusque hominis comprehendere potest. Coniungit enim fides animam cum invisibili, ineffabili, innominabili, aeterno, incogitabili verbo dei simulque separat ab omnibus visibilibus”

AWA 2, 140, 21-26: “Hoc est, quod vocabulum illud *sancto* indicat, quod, ut supra dictum est, separatum et secretum significat planeque id, quod attingi nec sensu nec mente potest; in quod qui rapitur, in deum invisibilem rapitur ac perfectissime purificatur, separatur, sanctificatur. Verum dura haec res humanae naturae et intolerabilis, nisi spiritus domini feratur super haes aquas et tenebras huius abyssi foveat, donec lux fiat <Gen 1,2s>.”

AWA 2, 141, 4-10: “Quare optime dicitur: *De monte sancto suo*, id est, de summa divinitate. Sed non omnes id intelligunt, quod dicunt. Nam de divinitate summa exaudiri est (ut dixi) in desperato et incogitabili modo exaudiri, ita ut nihil minus ibi sentiatur quam divinitatis auxilium seu exauditio. Fides enim et spes hic loquitur, seu de fide et spe exaudita recitatur historia. At fides et spes exaudita nihil sentit, nihil experitur, nihil intelligit de exauditione, cum sint rerum non apparentium <Hebr. 11,1>.”

<sup>209</sup> AWA 2, 300, 18 – 302, 8.

<sup>210</sup> WA 5, 623, 17: “Cum enim fides sit rerum non [18] apparentium et substantia sperandarum, vehementer repugnat, immo fidem [19] expugnat curiositas ista scrutandae maiestatis, posse et nosse salvare deum, [20] non est fides in hac hora, id enim experimento evidentissime sentit. Item [21] S. Petrum salvum fieri deo volente et omnes sanctos et electos aequae iam [22] non credit, sed scit. Verum te et me velle salvum facere, hoc non apparet [23] nec apparere debet. Haec voluntas incomprehensibilis est et esse debet. [24]



and the necessity of conforming to that will seem to reflect the voluntarist influences of the *via moderna* on Luther's view of God.<sup>211</sup> This is especially visible in the passages of the later *De servo arbitrio* where the will is taken as the essential defining characteristic of divinity.<sup>212</sup> These two aspects of God's incomprehensibility (will and essence) often appear together and alongside each other in Luther's writings.<sup>213</sup> They are joined together by the common principle expressed by Luther that no reason (*ratio*) or cause (*causa*) can be given for God. There is no superior rule or concept by which God could be explained or understood and his action foretold.<sup>214</sup> The incomprehensibility of the essence and the will of God thus belong together. The incomprehensibility of God in Luther's thought cannot be understood in a merely voluntarist manner, but it contains as well a strong essentialist element. Furthermore, it seems that the voluntarist aspect comes more to the fore in the

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Ideo sola fide hic opus est, et ea fide, quae non dubitet, deum facere et [25] facturum esse secum, quod iustissimum fuerit, sive servet sive perdat. Hic [26] enim manet gloria et laus dei in ore nostro, cum deo non nisi iustitiam [27] tribuimus in omni voluntate eius, etiam si hanc ipsam iustitiam non videamus, [28] sed tantum credamus, tam potenter contrarium suadente humano affectu [29] et daemonum persuasione. Impossibile autem est eum perire, qui deo gloriam [30] [1. Sam. 2, 30.] tribuit et eum iustificat in omni opere et voluntate sua, sicut dicit 1. Reg. 2. [31] 'Quicumque honorificaverit me, glorificabo eum'. Manifeste ergo patet, nequitiam [32] Satanae esse hanc tentationem de praedestinatione, tantum ut fidem [33] [Eph. 6, 16.] extinguat, cui consilio Apostoli scuto fidei occurrendum, et tela huius iniqui [34] ignita in eo extinguenda. Vere iniquus, idest versutus est, et ignita sunt [35] eius iacula in hac hora novissima, quia astutissime hominem retrahit ab iis, [36] quae non apparent, ut statuatur eum in iis, quae apparent. Vult enim hominem [37] facere et iudicare secundum quod sentit, non secundum id, quod non sentit. [38] Sentit autem, sese derelinqui, et non sentit, sese praedestinari. Si ergo secundum [39] [Ps. 32, 9.] sensum agat, 'sicut equus et mulus, quibus non est intellectus', non [40] potest fieri, ut servetur. Agat ergo secundum fidem, idest insensibilitatem, [1] et fiat truncus immobilis ad has blasphemias, quas in corde suo suscitavit [2] Satanas. Non enim sua sunt, sed satanae eiusmodi obiecta et sensa cordis. [3] De hoc satis."

See also WA 55, I, 860, 6-8; AWA 2, 313, 6-29.

<sup>211</sup> See the analysis of the need for trust in the tribulations in chapter 3.5.2.

<sup>212</sup> WA 18, 712, 29-38: "Reliqua [20] igitur sunt, ut quaerat quispiam, cur Deus non cesset ab ipso motu omnipotentiae, [21] quo voluntas impiorum movetur, ut pergat mala esse et peior [22] fieri? Respondetur: hoc est optare, ut Deus propter impios desinat esse [23] Deus, dum eius virtutem et actionem optas cessare, scilicet ut desinat esse [24] bonus, ne illi fiant peiores. At cur non simul mutat voluntates malas, quas [25] [Röm. 11, 33] movet? Hoc pertinet ad secreta maiestatis, ubi incomprehensibilia sunt [26] iudicia eius. Nec nostrum hoc est quaerere, sed adorare mysteria haec. [27] Quod si caro et sanguis hic offensa murmuret, Murmuret sane, sed nihil [28] [Joh. 6, 66] efficiet, Deus ideo non mutabitur. Et si scandalisati impii discedant quam [29] plurimi, Electi tamen manebunt. Idem dicitur illis, qui quaerunt: Cur permisit [30] Adam ruere, et cur nos omnes eodem peccato infectos condit, cum [31] potuisset illum servare et nos aliunde vel primum purgato semine creare. [32] Deus est, cuius voluntatis nulla est causa nec ratio, quae illi ceu regula [33] et mensura praescribatur, cum nihil sit illi aequale aut superius, sed ipsa [34] est regula omnium. Si enim esset illi aliqua regula vel mensura aut causa [35] aut ratio, iam nec Dei voluntas esse posset. Non enim quia sic debet vel [36] debuit velle, ideo rectum est, quod vult. Sed contra: Quia ipse sic vult, [37] ideo debet rectum esse, quod fit. Creaturae voluntati causa et ratio praescribitur [38] sed non Creatoris voluntati, nisi alium illi praefeceris creatorem."

<sup>213</sup> WA 57, b214, 2 – 25; AWA 2, 140, 4-7: "'Tu autem in sancto habitas', id est, in abscondito et inaccessio secreto. Sicut enim / deus est ineffabilis, incomprehensibilis, inaccessibilis, ita eius voluntas et auxilium praesertim in tempore derelictionis."

<sup>214</sup> WA 56, 115, 11 – 116, 3: "**O altitudo**<sup>4</sup> o profunditas seu abyssus **diuitiarum sapientiae** qua [12] cuncta dispensat ac gubernat **et scientiae** i. e. cognitionis, quia omnia [1] novit seu videt **dei: quam incomprehensibilia sunt** quia non est ratio [2] reddibilis super iis, que videmus fieri ab eo **iudicia eius et inuestigabiles** [3] i. e. inscrutabiles<sup>1</sup> **viae eius.**"<sup>25</sup>

WA 56, 116 gloss 2: "GLOSSA:<sup>2</sup> [17] Et ideo eo ipso omnes stulti sunt, qui scientiam rerum querunt [18] per causas, vt Aristoteles, cum sint 'incomprehensibiles'."

See also Heckel 2010, 43-44.

later writings, culminating in the *De servo arbitrio*, which falls outside the period of this study.

In conclusion, one can note that the incomprehensibility and incogitability of God have to do above all with the divine essence or the “highest divinity” (*summa divinitate / summae divinitatis*). By this concept Luther seems to refer to the concrete Godhead shared by the divine persons: that which God is in himself. The term also seems to stand for the Father as the source of divinity, at least in the respect that he is unknown to the Son during his suffering. In any case, from the texts examined it does seem that the essence of God cannot be reduced in Luther to the relations between the persons (i.e., it is not merely relational). Luther has an essentialist concept of the divine nature, which includes the notion that the divine nature is incomprehensible, incogitable and described in terms of negative theology.

#### 2.2.4.3 God as Hidden

Rather than speaking about God as incomprehensible and ineffable, Lutheran theologians have usually preferred the notion of the *deus absconditus*, the hidden God. As mentioned above, this idea carries antimetaphysical connotations, against which I will present criticism in the following discussion.<sup>215</sup> The idea that God hides under contraries is indeed expressed at multiple points in Luther’s texts, for example in the *Dictata* in connection with Ps. 91:6:

Therefore note, that as blessed divinity, i.e., wisdom, light, virtue, glory, truth, goodness, salvation, life and every good thing was hidden under the flesh, when nevertheless in the flesh all evil appeared, such as confusion, death, Cross, infirmity, weakness, darkness and worthlessness, (for thus a different and most dissimilar thing appeared to outward eyes, ears, touch and to all powers of the whole man, not what was hidden inside), so it is in the same way always up to the present day.<sup>216</sup>

Luther also expresses the same idea in the *Lecture on Romans*:

It is necessary that the work of God (*opus Dei*) is hidden and not understood when it happens. It is however not hidden in another way than under a contrary appearance (*sub contraria specie*) to our imagination or thought. Therefore Gabriel said to the Virgin: ‘The Holy Spirit will come over you’, i.e., will come over that which you think, ‘and the power of the Most High will overshadow you’, i.e., you will not understand, therefore do not ask,

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<sup>215</sup> See the introduction at chapter 2.2.4 and footnote 169.

<sup>216</sup> WA 55, II, 720, 69-75: “Vnde Nota, [70] Quod sicut sub carne abscondita fuit benedicta diuinitas, i. e. sapientia, [71] lux, virtus, gloria, veritas, bonitas, salus, vita et omne bonum, cum tamen [72] in carne apparuerit omne malum vt confusio, mors, crux, infirmitas, [73] languor, tenebre et vilitas (Sic enim aliud et dissimillimum apparuit foris [74] oculis, auribus, tactui, immo omnibus viribus totius hominis ei quod intus [75] latuit), Ita vsque modo semper.”

how it will happen. This is how he acted in the work most proper to him, which is the first and the exemplar of all of his works, i.e., in Christ.<sup>217</sup>

The principal example of God's works is Christ. The divinity was hidden under its opposite in the Incarnation and the entire life of Christ, especially on the Cross. According to Luther this is also the mode God performs his work in all believers. Blessings are hidden under sufferings. But why is God hidden under contraries?

The first reason seems to be to humble the proud and humiliate human wisdom, which did not wish to recognise God through the natural knowledge of God (in principle perceivable in the Creation), but instead bestowed the abstract divine attributes to creations of its own choosing.<sup>218</sup> Therefore, God has hidden his true wisdom and knowledge by detaching the sign from the signified. Although the natural knowledge of the abstract attributes of God (such as wisdom and goodness) remains, concrete knowledge of God and his nature (*vera notitia de vera essentia*) can no longer be obtained through the metaphysically apparent (i.e., great, beautiful etc.) works of God, but rather precisely through those works that stand in contradiction to them. That is, the faith which grants understanding of the invisible works of God can only be obtained under the opposites of those invisible works: under the concrete humanity of Christ and the materia of the sacraments. Luther therefore calls the works of God not only profound, but exceedingly profound: they are not merely spiritual (and profound as such), but in them spiritual goods are hidden under their contraries (i.e., hidden in an exceedingly profound manner).<sup>219</sup> This hiding can therefore be seen as God's 'response' to human idolatry. Spiritual goods are no longer attainable through earthly goods, but through the opposite of earthly goods. By this means human wisdom focused on sensible and apparent things is brought to folly and its defects in grasping the invisible become apparent. Therefore, humility and confessing the limits of one's own wisdom are necessary for attaining the wisdom of God.<sup>220</sup> However, this confession cannot happen unless God leads the human person into suffering (*passio*), destroying in the process the cherished human wisdom, so that God can give to the human being his spiritual wisdom. Luther calls this most contradictory work of God miraculous (*mirabilis*).<sup>221</sup> Because the action of God

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<sup>217</sup> WA 56, 376, 31 – 377, 5. "Necesse est enim opus Dei abscondi et non intelligi tunc, [32] quando fit. Non autem absconditur aliter quam sub contraria specie [1] nostri conceptus seu cogitationis. Vnde dixit Gabriel ad Virginem: [2] 'Spiritus sanctus superueniet in te', i. e. supra quam tu cogitas, veniet, [3] 'et virtus altissimi obumbrabit tibi', i. e. non intelliges, ideo ne queras, [4] quomodo fiat. Sic enim egit in opere suo proprio, quod est primum [5] et exemplar omnium operum suorum, i. e. in Christo."

<sup>218</sup> Luther seems to think that the loss of the natural knowledge of the Creator perceivable in his works (cf. Rom. 1:18-23) was a gradual process. In the beginning the human race would have recognized God with the intellect through God's works, but because of the conscious commitment of the sin of idolatry, knowledge of the true God waned and the wicked became more and more mentally obscured. It would appear that according to Luther the human race has now become obscured and ignorant to such a degree that the intellectual perception of God through his works is no longer naturally possible. This nevertheless does not relieve an individual from the responsibility, because in the beginning such knowledge was accessible (WA 56, 11, 1 – 12, 3; WA 56, 12 gloss 3). The creation itself still testifies to the wisdom of God and is a sign of God, but the understanding or intellect required to comprehend this testimony can now only be restored through faith, not through natural abilities (WA 55, II, 824, 698-701; 825, 723-728).

<sup>219</sup> WA 55, II, 719, 52 – 720, 80; WA 56, 15, 1-4; 176, 14 – 178, 17; 380, 31 – 381, 11.

<sup>220</sup> WA 55, II, 720, 81 – 721, 94.

<sup>221</sup> WA 56, 375, 1 – 377, 9.

contradicts everything natural human wisdom considers good and proper to God, Luther can even call God “negative essence” (*negativa essentia*).<sup>222</sup>

However, there seems to be also a second reason for God’s hiddenness under contraries, which is connected to the nature of God. According to Luther, God has “become great” (*magnificatus*), just because he has “become small” (*parvificatus*) in the Incarnation, suffering, Cross and death:

He is called “he who has become great” (*magnificatus*) [...] because he has become small and humiliated; small when he left from the Father and came into the World, was made man and suffered in all ways, was crucified, and died. But then he again went to the Father and was shown to be God. In that way he first appeared as man and after that as God, first was made small and after that great. He became exceedingly great, because he became exceedingly small. ‘For he emptied himself’ etc.<sup>223</sup>

For Luther God is miraculous (*mirabilis*) especially because he who is most high works through things that are most low and contradictory to his proper majesty. In this sense God is “most common” (*communissimus*), present in everything and over, under, inside, outside, before and after everything; both being present in all the differences and surpassing them.<sup>224</sup> It belongs to the essence of God to be in all places and in all times: in highness, lowness, broadness, present, past, future, over, under and inside.<sup>225</sup> Luther summarizes this by stating that God is all in all (*omnia in omnibus*):

God is truly all in all, equal and the same, but at the same time most unequal and diverse. For he is the one who is simple in multiplicity; multiple in simplicity; in inequality equal; in equality unequal; in sublimity low; in highness deep; in the innermost the outermost;

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<sup>222</sup> WA 56, 392, 17 – 393, 20.

<sup>223</sup> WA 55, II, 799, 3-9: “[3] **Magnificatus** dicitur [[[mora]liter vide infra ... magnificata]], quia [4] paruus factus est et humiliatus; paruus, cum Exiuit a patre et venit [5] 4, 172 in | mundum, factus homo et omnino passus, crucifixus et mortuus. Sed [6] rursus vasis ad patrem et manifestatus est esse Deus. Igitur prius apparuit [7] homo et postea Deus, prius paruificatus et postea magnificatus. [8] Magnificatus vehementer, quia paruificatus vehementer. ‘Exinaniuit enim [9] seipsum’ etc.”

<sup>224</sup> WA 55, II, 379, 669 – 380, 682: “[669] Secundo ‘Mirabilis in sanctis’, quos maxime diligit et tamen ita percutit [670] et humiliat. Hoc enim proprie bonitatem, sicut primum potentiam vel [671] maiestatem respicit, licet vbique sit potentia, Sapientia et bonitas. Sed [672] Mirabilis est bonitas, que in mala mittit et affligit. Et mirabilis altitudo [673] maiestatis, que etiam in infimis presens est et operatur et loquitur cum illis. [674] Cum sit altissimus, omnium fere videtur esse communissimus et omnibus [675] obsequi et benefacere. Sunt enim Multe differentie rerum, [676] Et in his omnibus Deus est super et subter, intra et extra, [677] ante et retro. Vt Mole est omni superior, inferior, interior, [678] exterior, prior, posterior, Sic etiam vita qualibet [679] et Sensu et intellectu. Ad omnes enim omnium illorum [680] differentias et limites Deus adest et superest. Et in his [681] omnibus stupendus, metuendus, terribilis et ‘mirabilis’, [682] Scil. ‘in sanctis suis’.”

<sup>225</sup> WA 55, I, 860: “[138, 6] **Mirabilis** superior et incomprehensibilis **facta est scientia tua** diuina predestinatio, que est essentia tua **ex me** i. e. mihi, quia tibi soli est comprehensibilis<sup>12</sup>; **confortata est** super me **et non potero ad eam** vt eam comprehendam, cum sit ipsa Dei essentia. [138, 7] **Quo ibo** Vere omnia cognouisti presentia, Vbicunque sunt **a spiritu tuo** qui vbique videt et scit : **et quo a facie tua** BI 104v presentia tua **fugiam?** [138, 8] \*Si<sup>13</sup> .<sup>14</sup> **ascendero** si ascenderem et ita nec in altitudine latere vllus potest **in caelum tu illic es**“

WA 55, I, 860 gloss 13: “GLOSSA.<sup>13</sup> Probat primo prouidentiam Dei omnia nosse quoad loca, quia in altitudine, in profunditate et latitudine Vbique est. Sicut supra probauit eam extendi ad omnia tempora, presentia, preterita, futura, ita hic ad omnia loca, sursum, deorsum et in latius.”

and vice versa. So in the infirm he is powerful; in the powerful infirm; in the stupid wise; in the wise, stupid; in brief: he is all in all.<sup>226</sup>

Luther appears to think that this coincidence of opposites belongs to the nature of God. For God to be truly miraculous, omnipresent and all in all, his highness needs to be present in the most low things and his essence needs to surpass the differences of the created order. That the incarnation of Christ is the most proper work of God is an expression of this character of the divine nature, because especially in Christ the mutual opposites come together and are dissolved by divine wisdom.<sup>227</sup>

There have been attempts to trace statements of this kind found in Luther to the tradition of Nicholas of Cusa. This however, seems to be a mistake.<sup>228</sup> It rather appears that one should seek the roots of these paradoxical statements of Luther regarding the nature of God as reconciling in himself the mutual opposites again from the Victorines and Franciscan Augustinianism, which appropriated Dionysian thought. One particular example of this, as noted earlier, is Luther's use of the image of the two Cherubim to illustrate the nature of divine wisdom which transcends contraries. The same Cherubim stand in Richard of St. Victor's *Benjamin major* as an image of the contemplation of the similitude and the dissimilitude of God with respect to rational concepts, and as an image of how opposite and contrary sentences regarding God (e.g. divine unity and trinity) are reconciled with each other.<sup>229</sup> Bonaventure uses the image of the Cherubim precisely as an image of the contemplation of the union of the divine and human attributes in Christ, attributes which are in contradiction with each other.<sup>230</sup> Furthermore, Bonaventure's expressions in his *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* about the divine essence as something that (because it is most perfect) is inside (*intra*), outside (*extra*), over (*supra*) and below (*infra*)

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<sup>226</sup> AWA 2, 309, 2-7: "est iam deus vere omnia in omnibus, aequus et idem, simul tamen inaequalissimus et diversissimus. Ipse est enim, qui in multitudine simplex, in simplicitate multiplex, in inaequalitate aequalis, in aequalitate inaequalis, in sublimitate infimus, in excelsis profundus, in intimis extremus et e diverso. Sic in infirmis potens, in potentibus infirmus, in stultis sapiens, in sapientibus stultus, breviter, omnia in omnibus."

<sup>227</sup> WA 55, II, 73, 11-18; WA 57, b189, 7-19; b201, 10 – b202, 8. See also Nilsson 1966, 202-205; 250-252. According to Nilsson Christ is the most proper work of God, because in him the *opus proprium* and *opus alienum* come together.

<sup>228</sup> See Weier 1967, 171-174 with reference to Augustine, Faber Stapulensis and Cusanus. See also Cranx 2000, 192-193, who finds similarities in expressions between Cusanus and Luther. Leppin 2005, 63-65 on the contrary argues against any relationship between Luther and Cusanus. It seems to me as well that the nature of Luther's thought is quite remote from Cusanus, but there are similarities in expressions, which stem from the general Christian Neoplatonic tradition in which both participate through different sources.

<sup>229</sup> WA 57, b201, 10 – b202; 8; WA 2, 497, 13-15. See also WA 55, I, 138, 1-8; WA 55, II, 137, 1-12. In the first passage, which is the most central for the topic, Luther refers to Gregory the Great's definition in *Moralium sive Expositio in Job* (PL 76, 29A-29B; 666B) that the Cherubim signify contemplation, a point noted as well in the footnotes of WA 57. According to Gregory, the Cherubim stand for the fullness of knowledge (*plenitudo scientiae*) and their flight, rising above that knowledge. However, Gregory does not mention the idea that the Cherubs unite contradictions. The latter idea, however, is central to Richard of St. Victor's *Benjamin major*, an allegorical treatise on the Ark of the Covenant. See especially book IV chapters I; III; VIII (the two cherubs representing similitude and dissimilitude, the latter including things that are against reason) and XVII-XX (unity of rational and suprarational things in Trinity and Incarnation) as well as the appendix *Nonnullae allegoriae tabernaculi foederis*, (PL 196, 198C-199B). See also McGinn 1994, 406-411. Luther's other uses of the figures of the Tabernacle also show striking similarities to Richard, about which see p. 113 ff.

<sup>230</sup> See *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* VI, 4-6.

everything, and as such all in all (*omnia in omnibus*), come so close to Luther's statements about the divine nature that they seem to be textually related.<sup>231</sup> As it has been shown that Luther read Bonaventure's *Itinerarium* during his monastery years at Erfurt, it seems probable that indeed Luther is here indebted to Bonaventure.<sup>232</sup> The same proximity to Bonaventure was already noted in Luther's ideas concerning the divine nature as the highest good, as well as in Luther's statements regarding the metaphysics of light. Luther's teaching concerning the nature of God, as well when it comes to God as hidden (*deus absconditus*), therefore does not stand at a great distance from the tradition of negative and metaphysical theology, as was claimed by the Neo-Lutherans of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It rather incorporates ideas from the Augustinian Platonist tradition represented by Richard of St. Victor, Bonaventure and Jean Gerson, against which Luther's thoughts are often made represented. Both are based on the same basic idea that divinity transcends and reconciles categorical differences which exist in the created world, in a way which surpasses human reason. Luther's idea of the hidden God does not therefore constitute a general rejection of ontological thinking, but only a rejection of certain kind of ontology based on a simplistic idea of *analogia entis* or an ascent to God by means of speculative conceptual negation. God's hiddenness under opposites rather reflects Luther's view of the essential characteristics of the divine nature as extending beyond itself and uniting contrary things within itself.

## 2.3. Universe

### 2.3.1. The Creation as a Sign

This chapter examines Luther's understanding of the nature of the universe (i.e., the created cosmos). The objects of our examination are not natural cosmological and physical elements, but certain theologically central features of the composition of the universe and their ontological or metaphysical nature. The themes we will examine are: the nature of

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<sup>231</sup> *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* V, 8: "Rursus reverentes dicamus: quia igitur esse purissimum et absolutum, quod est simpliciter esse est primum et novissimum, ideo est omnium origo et finis consummans. — Quia aeternum et praesentissimum, ideo omnes durationes ambit et intrat, quasi simul existens earum centrum et circumferentia. — Quia simplicissimum et maximum, ideo totum intra omnes et totum extra, ac per hoc « est sphaera intelligibilis, cuius centrum est ubique et circumferentia nusquam ». — Quia actualissimum et immutabilissimum, ideo « stabile manens moveri dat universa ». — Quia perfectissimum et immensum, ideo est intra omnia, non inclusum, extra omnia, non exclusum, supra omnia, non elatum, infra omnia, non prostratum. — Quia vero est summe unum et omnimodum, ideo est omnia in omnibus, quamvis omnia sint multa et ipsum non sit nisi unum; et hoc, quia per simplicissimam unitatem, serenissimam veritatem, sincerissimam bonitatem est in eo omnis virtuositas, omnis exemplaritas et omnis communicabilitas; ac per hoc, ex ipso et per ipsum et in ipso sunt omnia, et hoc, quia omnipotens, omnisciens et omnimode bonum, quod perfecte videre est esse beatum, sicut dictum est Moysi: Ego ostendam tibi omne bonum."

<sup>232</sup> See AWA 9, LXXII-LXXIII; CXXVI-CXXVII; Rühl 1960, 81-82; Leppin 2014, 50-52. In addition, in the *Table Talk* Luther confirms that he read Bonaventure's writings in his monastery years. His estimation of their value is contradictory, however, as Luther states both that Bonaventure is best of the Scholastics and a man full of the Holy Spirit, as well as that his mystical writings nearly made him mad. See WA Tr. 1, 72, 26-36 (153); 302, 30 – 303, 3 (644); 330, 1-6 (683); 435, 18 – 32, 3 (871 and 872).

the visible creation as sign of the invisible; the different types of acts and works of God in the universe; and the transformation the universe is undergoing from the state of the old visible creation to the state of invisible, New Creation. These themes form central ideas of Luther's understanding of reality with regard to the created world as a whole.

When dealing with Luther, the term 'metaphysical' itself can only be used with care and some qualification. In his article *Luther and Metaphysics: What Is the Structure of Being according to Luther* Sammeli Juntunen points to the general anti-metaphysical and anti-ontological tendencies both in much of Luther research and in Luther himself.<sup>233</sup> Luther's theology is laced with the criticism of Aristotelian-Thomistic substance metaphysics, which has often led to the claim that Luther's thought is inherently anti-ontological. However, Luther's criticism of Aristotle has a reverse side. In precisely the same passages in which Luther unleashes his most harsh criticism of Aristotle, one can also discern central principles of his own metaphysical thought.<sup>234</sup> Luther writes in the *Dictata super Psalterium*:

There is more philosophy and wisdom in this verse 'I will open my mouth in parables' than if Aristotle had written a thousand Metaphysics. This is because through it it is learned that every visible creature is a parable and full of mystical instruction, according to how the Wisdom of God arranges all things beautifully and all things are made in wisdom. Every creature of God is a word of God 'For he spoke, and they were made'. Therefore creatures are to be beheld as utterances of God. Therefore to fix the heart in created things is to fix it in the sign instead of the reality, which is God alone. 'The invisible things of God are understood from these works', Romans 1.<sup>235</sup>

Luther's text contains important points regarding his perception of the structure of reality. First, all things are made through the Wisdom of God and are his 'words' (*verba*) or 'utterances' (*locutiones*). Thus they reflect and in some way also exist in the wisdom of God. Second, because of this, visible things are signs, signs "full of mystical instruction". The visible world reflects the invisible and points to it. Therefore it is not the ultimate reality but a sign pointing to a reality outside of itself. That reality to which it points is God.<sup>236</sup> Luther writes:

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<sup>233</sup> Juntunen 1998, 129-131.

<sup>234</sup> On the definition of metaphysics, see van Inwagen 2010. While Luther does not seem to be especially interested in definite substances and quiddities or the qualities, relations and predicates thereof (and indeed seems to understand 'metaphysics' as a term mostly pertaining to these), he deals in his writings with other questions that are commonly considered metaphysical both in classical and in modern sense, such as: first and final causes, the relationships of changing and unchanging things and the nature of certain other categories of being (esp. acts and works, *acta et facta*).

<sup>235</sup> WA 55, II, 535, 33 – 536, 41: "[33] Plus philosophie et sapientie est in isto versu: 'Aperiam in parabolis [34] os meum', quam si mille metaphysicas Scripsisset Aristoteles. Quia hinc [35] discitur, quod omnis creatura visibilis est parabola et plena mystica eruditione, [36] secundum quod sapientia Dei disponit omnia suauiter et omnia [37] 3, 561 in | sapientia facta sunt, Omnisque creatura Dei verbum Dei est: 'Quia [38] ipse dixit, et facta sunt.' Ergo Creaturas inspicere oportet tanquam locutiones [39] Dei. Atque ideo ponere cor in res creatas Est in signum et non rem [40] ponere, que est Deus solus. 'Ex operibus enim istis Inuisibilia Dei intellecta [41] conspiciuntur', Ro. 1."

<sup>236</sup> See also WA 55, II, 511, 148-154; 825, 723-729. On the manner in which the creation reflects the "Wisdom of God" as an expression of an ontology of participation, see chapter 2.2.3.

Therefore from the literal sense you have the fruit that it teaches that creatures are not to be beheld absolutely, but with respect to the Creator. Like a finger, while it shows you the creature it at the same time leads you to its creator, saying: ‘you have made them, you send them away watering them’ etc. [[So that you would praise God in all things and not thank luck.]] No human philosophy or wisdom does this, they only seek the quiddities, as it is said.<sup>237</sup>

The ultimate problem in what Luther calls “human wisdom” and “human philosophy” is that Luther sees it as only interested in this-worldly things, the quiddities and qualities of the present creatures. It lacks the perspective of God, considering the created things only in themselves, not as signs pointing to God. Luther deals with this problematic character of philosophy in length at his *Lecture on Romans*:

The expectation of the Creation [8,19]

The Apostle thinks and philosophizes in a different way about things than the philosophers and metaphysicians, for the philosophers submerge their eyes in such manner into present things, that only their quiddities and qualities are speculated on, whereas the Apostle recalls our eyes from the looking at present things, their essence and accidents, and directs them to those according to which they are future things. He does not say ‘essence’ or ‘working’ of the creature, or ‘act’ or ‘passion’ or ‘movement’, but in a new and marvelous vocabulary and theology says: ‘the expectation of the Creation’, so that when the mind hears the expectation of the creature it would not most in all stretch out to and seek the creature, but that which the creature expects. But woe!, so deeply and harmfully do we remain in predicaments and quiddities, that we are enveloped by stupid opinions in metaphysics. When do we understand and see that in doing so we lose precious time and are lost in futile studies and neglect the better things? Always we act so that what Seneca says pertains to us: ‘We ignore the necessary when we study the superfluous, even ignore the helpful when we study the damnable.’

I believe that I owe to the Lord the service to bark against philosophy and advocate the Holy Scripture. Should someone who has not seen it do so, he might fear to act so or he might not be believed. But I have consumed many years in such things and having experienced and heard much of it, I see how it is a study in futility and perdition. Therefore I admonish you all as far as I can that you would do its studies quickly, and only seek it in order not to establish it and defend it, but rather as we study evil arts in order to destroy them, and errors in order to disprove them. Let us then [also study] this so that we might reject it, or undertake it in order that we could apply its manner of speech when discussing with them with whom it is necessary. For the time has namely come when we should surrender other studies and only study Jesus Christ, and ‘him crucified’.

Therefore you become the best philosophers, the best speculators of things, if you learn from the Apostle to see the Creation as expecting, groaning, being in labour, i.e., loathing that which it is, and desiring that, which in the future | not yet | is, then | for | soon

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<sup>237</sup> WA 55, II, 822, 637-642: “[637] Vnde et ex litera hunc habes fructum, Quod Creaturas non absolute, [638] Bl 210 Sed \* in ordine ad creatorem docet inspicere. Quia velut digito simul, dum [639] creaturam ostendit, te ad eius creatorem manuducit, dicens: ‘tu fecisti, [640] rigans emittis’ etc. [[Vt in omnibus Deum benedicas et non fortunam laudes.]] [641] Quod nulla facit philosophia et humana sapientia, que solum quidditates [642] querit, vt dicitur.”



diminishes the science of quiddities, accidents and differences of things. Therefore the stupidity of the philosophers is similar to one who helps the tentmaker and admires the cutting of the trunks and poles and contently settles to their chopping and pruning, having no curiosity as to what the tentmaker is going to make out of all these. That man is pointless and the work of such a worker only serves futility. So also the Creation of God, which is continually prepared for future glory, is by the fools only examined with regard to how it appears, but never with respect to its end. Do we not therefore clearly speak deliriously when we ponder the praise and fame of philosophy? We keep the science of the essences, workings and passions of the things in high value, but the things themselves disdain their essences, workings and passions and groan! We rejoice and take pride in such science which they themselves grieve and disdain. Or has not he who, when he sees one who cries and laments, laughs and boasts to have seen the same as joyful become himself laughable? Such a person is deservedly called mad and a maniac. It would be at least tolerable if the rough masses would foolishly esteem this as worthwhile and not aspire to understand the sighs of created things, but now even the wise and the theologians infected by this 'wisdom of the flesh' imbibe joyful science from miserable things and, ridiculing the things that sigh, gather together most extraordinary thoughts. Therefore the Apostle rightly speaks against philosophy in Col. 3: 'Make sure, that no one would deceive you by philosophy and empty fallacy which follow human traditions.' Certainly the Apostle would not have condemned philosophy so absolutely, if he had wished it to be understood as something useful and good. Therefore, we conclude that whoever rather examines the essences and workings of the creatures rather than | their | sighs and expectations is without a doubt stupid and blind and does not know, that creatures are creatures. This is sufficiently clear from the text.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> WA 56, 371, 1 – 372, 25: "[1] **Nam Expectatio Creature**, [8, 19]. [2] Aliter Apostolus de rebus philosophatur et sapit quam philosophi [3] et metaphysici. Quia philosophi oculum ita in presentiam rerum immergunt, [4] vt solum quidditates et qualitates earum speculentur, Apostolus [5] autem oculos nostros reuocat ab intuitu rerum presentium, ab essentia [6] et accidentibus earum, et dirigit in eas, secundum quod future sunt. [7] Non enim dicit 'Essentia' Vel 'operatio' creature seu 'actio' et 'passio' [8] et 'motus', Sed nouo et miro vocabulo et theologico dicit 'Expectatio [9] Creature', Vt eoipso, cum animus audit Creaturam expectare, non ipsam [10] creaturam amplius, Sed quid creatura expectet, intendat et querat. [11] Sed heu, quam profunde et noxie heremus in predicamentis et quidditatibus, [12] quot stultis opinionibus in metaphysica Inuoluimur! Quando [13] sapiemus et videbimus, quod tam preciosum tempus tam vanis studiis [14] perdimus et meliora negligimus? Semper agimus, vt sit verum in [15] nobis, quod Seneca ait: 'Necessaria ignoramus, quia superflua didicimus, [16] Immo Salutaria ignoramus, quia damnabilia didicimus.'

[17] Ego quidem Credo me debere Domino hoc obsequium latrandi [18] contra philosophiam et suadendi ad Sacram Scripturam. Nam alius [19] forte si faceret, qui ea non vidisset, Vel timeret Vel non crederetur ei.

[20] Ego autem in illis detritus multis iam annis et multos itidem expertus [21] et audiens Video, quod sit studium vanitatis et perditionis.

[22] Idcirco omnes vos moneo, quantum possum, Vt ea studia cito faciatis [23] Et id solum queratis, non vt ea statuatis et defendatis, Sed potius sicut [24] artes malas discimus, vt destruamus, et errores, vt reuincamus. Ita et [25] Bl. 97 hec, vt reprobemus, Aut \*saltem, vt modum loquendi ipsorum, cum [26] quibus conuersari necesse est, accipiamus. Tempus est enim, vt aliis [27] studiis mancipemur et Ihesum Christum discamus, 'et hunc crucifixum'.

[28] Igitur optimi philosophi, optimi rerum speculatores fueritis, Si ex [29] Apostolo didiceritis Creaturam intueri expectantem, gementem, parturientem [30] i. e. fastidientem id, quod est, et cupientem id, quod futura [31] | nondum | est. tunc | enim | cito vilescet Scientia quidditatis rerum [32] et accidentium ac differentiarum. Vnde philosophorum stultitia similis [33] est ei, Qui Scenofactori assistens miratur lignorum et asserum sectiones, [1] dolationes et putationes iisque stulte contentus quiescit, nihil curans, [2] quid Scenofactor tandem iis omnibus operibus suis facere disponat. [3] Vanus iste est et vanitati seruit opus huius

Luther's text illustrates how Luther sees philosophy and metaphysics. They deal with the nature of created things as *present things*, only as the things themselves, and only as they exist in their present but not in their future state in the grand scheme of the works of God. Therefore these disciplines have some limited use in disproving errors and enabling one to participate in academic philosophical discussion, but according to Luther no great time and effort should be devoted to their study. According to Luther, the joyful science of theology should not be derived from the results of the examinations that concern creatures in their present sorrowful state. (The target of Luther's criticism here seems to be the use of Aristotelian concepts in solving theological questions, as the Scholastics did). Rather, Luther stresses that the eyes should be directed to the "expectation" (*expectatio*) of the creatures, to that with respect to which they (already in some way) are future things. The creatures should be observed with respect to their end, beheld as *creatures* – which implies the Creator.

The question arises, however: what is the exact relation between the creatures in their present state and the invisible reality they point to? What is the exact relation between the expectation and its fulfillment, between the sign and the signified? This question can be answered in detail only after we have discussed the distinctions Luther makes between different kinds of works and deeds of God. For now, it is sufficient to outline the principle that Luther considers all created things (as well as the works of God during the Old Covenant) as transitory signs. Luther summarizes his view in his scholia to Ps. 63:

Because all the works of creation and of the old law are signs of the works of God, which he does and will do in Christ and his saints, therefore those in the past are all signs which are fulfilled in Christ. For all of them are transitory, signifying those, which are eternal and permanent. These are works of truth while the others are all shadows and figurative works. Therefore Christ is the end and center of them all, to which they all look and point, as if they were saying: Look, he is the one who is, we are not, we merely signify. Therefore the Jews are accused in Ps. 27 of that they did not understand the works and did not have understanding in them, that is, they did not behold the works of the old law intellectually, but only carnally, not as signs and arguments of things, but as things themselves. But what is understood is invisible, wholly different from that which is seen. Therefore, the Apostles proclaimed the works of God (namely as realized in Christ) and from them understood his deeds, that is, things which were in the past and in the creation, namely understanding that

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operarii. Sic et Creatura [4] Dei, quæ paratur assidue ad futuram gloriam, ab insipientibus solum [5] aspicitur in apparatu eiusmodi et nequaquam in fine. Nonne ergo [6] insigniter delyramus, Quando philosophiæ, Laudes et preconia meditatur? [7] Ecce nos Scientiam de essentiis et operationibus et passionibus rerum [8] pretiose estimamus, et res ipse essentias suas et operationes et passiones [9] fastidiunt et gemunt! Nos de scientia illius gaudemus et gloriamur, [10] Quod de seipso tristatur et sibiipso displicet! An non furit, queso, [11] qui flentem et lamentantem videns ridet et gloriatur se videre velut [12] Iucundum et ridentem? Phreneticus utique ac Maniacus hic merito [13] vocatur. Et quidem Si rudis populus hæc ita stulte aliquid esse estimaret [14] Et nesciret rerum suspiria intelligere, tolerabile esset. Nunc vero Sapientes [15] et theologi eadem 'prudencia Carnis' infecti in rebus | tristantibus | iucundam [16] scientiam hauriunt Et de suspirantibus ridentes congerunt cognitiones [17] Mira potentia.

[18] Igitur Recte Colos. 3. Apostolus contra philosophiam loquitur dicens: [19] 'Videte, ne quis vos decipiat per philosophiam et inanem fallaciam [20] secundum traditionem hominum.' Sane Si aliquam Apostolus utilem et [21] bonam voluisset intelligi philosophiam, non utique absolute eam damnasset. [22] Concludamus Itaque, Quod Qui Creaturarum essentias et [23] operationes potius scrutatur quam suspiria et expectationes [24] | earum |, sine dubio stultus et cæcus est, Nesciens etiam [25] Creaturas esse creaturas. Patet satis ex textu."

the works of Christ were prefigured and signified in those ancient works. For the sign is then understood perfectly, when the reality itself is seen.<sup>239</sup>

According to Luther all the works of the Creation and the old law point as signs to Christ, who is the reality behind them. They are transitory things, shadow and figure, whereas Christ is the truth, their center and their end. In relation to Christ, the created things merely signify. They do not exist in a permanent manner (*'nos autem non sumus, sed significamus tantum'*).<sup>240</sup> Therefore they are not to be taken as "things themselves" (*res ipsas*), which is exactly the point Luther criticizes in philosophy. Luther's text, although it follows the reasoning behind his rejection of metaphysics, is in fact thoroughly metaphysical and quite Platonic. This becomes obvious by the stark contrast between the visible creation and the invisible divine reality. According to Luther, the reality which the created things as signs point to is "invisible, wholly different from that which is seen". It is described as being eternal and permanent, in contrast to the transitory nature of created things. Therefore it is clear that the signification of the created things does not primarily point to the incarnate Christ (though also that aspect is included as will be seen later), but its focus is on Christ as the Wisdom of God, the center and end signified and reflected by all creation.<sup>241</sup> This signification can however only be seen by the intellectual light, which itself has been lost in the Fall. After the Fall, human beings have become stupid and blind, focusing only on the creatures themselves, not on them as pointing to God.<sup>242</sup> Thus Luther's metaphysical ideas concerning the relation of the visible and invisible reality seem to follow the basic idea of Platonic Logos Christology, in which Christ is seen as the instrument and end of creation, and the creation is understood to be ordered after and reflecting the wisdom and logic of Christ as the eternal Word and Logos.<sup>243</sup> One can find

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<sup>239</sup> WA 55, II, 342, 126-140: "Quia omnia opera Creationis et veteris legis signa sunt [127] operum Dei, quæ in Christo et suis sanctis facit et faciet, et ideo in Christo [128] illa preterita tanquam signa omnia implentur. Nam omnia illa sunt transitoria, [129] significantia ea, que sunt æterna et permanentia. Et hec sunt opera [130] veritatis, illa autem omnia vmbra et opera figurationis. Ideo Christus finis [131] omnium et centrum, in quem omnia respiciunt et monstrant, ac si dicerent: [132] Ecce iste est, qui est, nos autem non sumus, Sed significamus tantum. [133] Vnde Iudei arguuntur Psal. 27. quod non intellexerunt opera et in [134] opera, i. e. opera in veteri lege non intellectualiter aspiciebant, Sed tantum [135] carnaliter, non vt signa et argumenta rerum, Sed res ipsas. Quia [136] quod intelligitur, Inuisibile est ab eo, quod videtur, aliud longe. Vnde [137] Apostoli Annunciauerunt opera Dei (scil. in Christo facta) et exinde Intellexerunt [138] facta eius, i. e. res preteritas in gestis et creationis, scil. intelligentes, [139] quoniam ista opera Christi in illis olim sint figurata et significata. [140] Quia tunc perfecte intelligitur signum, quando res ipsa signi videtur."

<sup>240</sup> On Christ as the content of all external things see also Nilsson 1966, 159-161. Nilsson does not, however, connect the idea to Platonist ontology.

<sup>241</sup> See also WA 55, I, 486 gloss 7, 4-10: "Et sic iterum [5] hic distinctio oritur inter opera et opera Dei. Quia opera significantia sunt [6] creatio totius mundi et omnia figuralia veteris legis, 'facta' autem sunt [7] impletiones eorundem, quod in Christo inceptum est impleri et nunc [8] Impletur et in fine impletur. Et ideo dixit Dominus: 'Cum exaltatus [9] fuero, omnia traham ad me'. Quia ipse finis omnium et res significata per [10] omnes res."

WA 55, I, 546, gloss 5: "GLOSSA:<sup>5</sup> Creatio rerum corporalium Est initium et figura et vmbra redemptionis et spiritualium rerum, que sunt finis illarum, sine quibus sunt vanæ ille; ideo assumantur pro parabolis spiritualium."

<sup>242</sup> In addition to the text in footnote 238, see WA 55, II, 801, 51-60; 825, 723-729; WA 56, 11, 12 – 12, 15.

<sup>243</sup> One can ask, however, if there is a tension between Luther's rejection of the idea of *analogia entis* (see chapter 2.2.4.3) and his idea of the creation as a sign of God. It would seem that this tension can be resolved by recourse to Luther's statement that the sign is only understood perfectly when the reality it

remarks quite similar to those of Luther about the nature of created things as signs and criticism of focus on natural philosophy from other medieval writers representing the tradition of Augustinian Christian Platonism.<sup>244</sup>

### 2.3.2. The Works of God

The basic difference between visible things and invisible spiritual things rests on Luther's distinction between the Old Creation and the New Creation. In *Dictata super Psalterium* in the course of his exposition of Ps. 27 Luther first makes a fundamental distinction between two types of works (*opera*) of God: *acta* (i.e., deeds, things done, actions), and *facta* (i.e., things made, products).<sup>245</sup> This distinction between products (*facta*) and deeds (*acta*) of God resembles the Aristotelian distinction between *poiesis* and *praxis*, where the former is action that produces something external, and the latter action that has an end in itself – e.g. making an artefact vs. moving the feet to walk.<sup>246</sup> What is important here is that Luther argues that God works in two different manners: by creating external works from nothing, and by acting through those works. The deeds of God (*acta*) are events that pass and have no existence; the products (*facta*) on the other hand persist for a duration of time and have at least some degree of existence in themselves as agents in their own right. God (and his action in creation and preservation of these external works) is the primary cause of everything, and the works themselves are secondary causes of that which happens.<sup>247</sup> However, with respect to the topic at hand the most important feature of Luther's ontology is the idea that not only the works of the first creation are *facturae* or

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points to is seen. Thus, while the visible creation is a sign of God, its signification cannot be properly understood without some kind of grasp of the thing signified by it. Because the divine intellectual light has waned in humanity after the Fall (see footnote 218), the signification of the Creation can no longer be understood, although the Creation still remains a sign objectively. This would seem to imply that Luther understands the relation between the sign and the signified causally and not cognitively (as a *vestigium* or imprint), independent of the ability of the observer to notice it. See also Grane 1997, 171-173.

<sup>244</sup> On signs, see Hugh of St. Victor, *De sacramentis* I, 5-6 (PL 176, 185A-185D) and Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*, I, 2. Similar critical remarks regarding the ill-fated curiosity of natural philosophy can be found in Hugh. See *De arca noe morali* IV, 6 (PL 176, 672B-672C).

<sup>245</sup> WA 55, 158, 26 – 159, 17: “[26] 27, 4.5 [Primo] Et recte dicit **opera et opera manuum**. Quia ‘opera manuum’ [27] sunt, que manu fieri solent, vt figuralia et artificata et effecta [1] seu facta. ‘Opera’ autem etiam aliorum organorum sunt vt oculorum, [2] 3, 156 pedum. Quare sola | ‘manuum opera’ exprimunt factibilia. Alia autem [3] sunt agibilia. Sic similiter ad Deum eodem modo: ‘opera Dei’ sunt [4] agibilia vel acta ipsa, ‘opera’ autem ‘manuum’ sunt factilia seu facta [5] [[infra Psal. 63]]. Quia Deus omnia facit et cum omnibus agit, et opera [6] eius sunt vsus factorum, quia illis vtitur in operibus suis, in factis autem [7] nullo vtitur. Sicut et homo factis vtitur ad operandum. Et aliud est [8] agere et facere in homine. [[Ideo facta dicuntur ‘opera manuum’ eius [9] et alia tantum ‘opera’ eius, quia ibi manus nostra ei cooperatur.]] Corollarium. [10] ‘Manus’ in scripturis frequentius significat facta quam [11] acta, vtraque tamen opera sunt, ‘pedes’ autem significant acta, vt ‘pes [12] enim meus stetit in via recta.’ Et ‘in factis manuum tuarum meditabar.’ [13] [Secundo] Est et alia differentia illorum, Quia acta transeunt et [14] sunt nullius existentie, facta autem perstant; vnde Recte Ecclesia et [15] Incarnatio Christi sunt facta Dei, et opera eorum Seu acta eius sunt [16, 17] opera Dei. Vt supra: ‘Annunciauerunt opera Dei et facta eius intellexerunt.’”

It is somewhat difficult to distinguish among these three in English, but I have opted to use the above translations in this chapter.

<sup>246</sup> See Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea* (EN) VI, 4 (1140a).

<sup>247</sup> WA 55, II, 156, 3-6; 342, 122-124; 823, 671-673. See also Juntunen 1996, 158-160; Juntunen 1998, 142-143.

products (having semi-permanent existence), but also that the works of the New Creation (i.e., the Church) are as well. This distinction is fundamental for Luther's division between the visible and invisible world:

**Man will go forth to his work** etc. It has often been said about the works (*opera*) of God that they are twofold, namely, things made (*facta*) and things done (*acta*). But through acts (*acta*) products (*facta*) come into existence. First of all about Christ, whose action (*opus actionis*) was evangelizing, but the product (*opus factionis*) was the Church, which he constituted through his action. What was said above can however be applied to both: 'From the fruits of your works (*opera*)', that is, of those two, 'the Earth is filled', because the Earth is filled with believers of Christ through the fruit of his action (*actionis*) and product (*factionis*). And Ps. 27: 'Because they did not have understanding in the works (*opera*) of the Lord and in the works (*opera*) of his hands'. Therefore because it is said in the future tense: 'Man will go forth' and Is. 66 says: 'these things are made (*facta*)', it is obvious that it is said of invisible things. So also Ps. 76: 'I will remember the work (*operum*) of the Lord' i.e., action (*actionum*), 'and will meditate in all of your works (*operibus*)', i.e., products (*factorum*). Therefore it is to be noted, that the world or creation is twofold:

1. Visible, which he first made and then acts and works with. Here the product (*factura*) is before working (*operatio*). For he who made them acts (*agit*) with every creature. Therefore also these works (*opera*) of the creatures are rightly called 'works (*opera*) of the Lord' just as the creature itself is a work (*opus*) of his hands.
2. Invisible, intelligible through faith is the Church, which is called new Heaven and New Earth. And here the products (*factura*) of God are the Apostles, prophets, teachers as in 1. Cor. 12 as the integral elements of this world and the works (*opera*) of his hands, or products (*facta*) he makes. But the works (*opera*) or acts (*acta*), with which he has made (*fecit*) these are the works (*opera*) of virtues and especially preaching. This is because the Word of God is the instrument, working through which he made this work (*facturam*), as it is said: 'The Heavens are made firm with the Word of the Lord' etc. just as the first creation is made (*facta*) with the Word of God as the medium of action.<sup>248</sup>

<sup>248</sup> WA 55, II, 823, 671 – 824, 697: "[671] 103, 23 4, 189 **Exibit homo ad opus suum et** etc. Sepissime dictum est de operibus [672] Dei, quomodo sint duplicia, scil. facta et acta. Sed per acta proueniunt [673] facta. Et primum de Christo, Cuius opus actionis fuit Euangelizare, Sed [674] opus factionis fuit Ecclesia, quam constituit per opus actionis suę. De vtroque [675] autem intelligi potest supradictum 'De fructu operum tuorum', scil. [676] istorum duorum, 'satiabitur terra', Quia terra repleta est fidelibus Christi [677] per fructum actionis et factionis eius. Et Psal. 27.: 'Quoniam non intellexerunt [678] opera Domini et in opera manuum eius'. Igitur cum hic per futurum [679] dicat: 'Exibit', et Isaie 66. dicat: 'facta sunt hec', patet, quod de inuisibilibus [680] loquitur. Sicut et Psal. 76.: 'Memor fui operum Domini', i. e. [681] actionum, 'Et meditabor in omnibus operibus tuis', scil. factorum. Quare [682] notandum, Quod duplex est mundus

[683]	{	Visibilis, quem prius fecit et deinde cum illo egit et operatur.
[684]	{	Hic enim prius est factura quam operatio. Nam cum
[685]	{	omni creatura agit, qui fecit eam. Nam et hec opera
[686]	{	creaturę recte 'opera Domini' dicuntur, sicut ipsa quoque
[687]	{	est opus manuum eius.

[688]	{	Inuisibilis, intelligibilis per fidem Est Ecclesia, que vocatur
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[689]	{	nouum celum et noua terra. Et hic sunt facture Dei
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[690]	seu Creatura: {	Apostoli, prophete, doctores, 1. Corin. 12., sicut partes integrales
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In Luther's view there are two creations: the visible world and the invisible. Both are made by the Word of God. But Luther understands the nature of the invisible world in a quite peculiar manner: It is the Church and its believers which are the "New Creation". The Church is the invisible and intellectual World, in which the faithful already participate by faith. This view is not mere allegory for Luther, but the Church in its proper nature is invisible, and as is the case with the other works of God, the invisible is more properly real than the visible, which is passing away. In the Church Militant the Church's proper nature is still hidden, and its invisible nature is concealed by its visible form. However, in the future glory that which is hidden will become manifest. Luther thus perceives the works of God as a continuous process which began in the first creation and leads towards the New Creation.<sup>249</sup> Luther's distinction between the two creations resembles somewhat the distinction, important for Hugh of St. Victor, between *opera conditionis* or the works of creation and *opera restaurationis*, the works of salvation. In Hugh's theology the two also stand in close relation to the distinction between the visible and invisible world.<sup>250</sup>

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- [691] { huius mundi Et opera manuum eius seu facta,  
 [692] { que fecit. Sed opera seu acta, quibus ista fecit, Sunt  
 [693] { opera virtutum et maxime predicationis. Quia verbum  
 [694] { Dei est Instrumentum, quo operans effecit istam facturam,  
 [695] { sicut ait: 'Verbo Domini celi firmati sunt' etc. Sicut  
 [696] { et prima creatio verbo Dei facta est velut medio  
 [697] { actionis."

<sup>249</sup> WA 55, I, 880-882 gloss 8, 1-6: "GLOSSA:<sup>8</sup> [1]Opera dei sunt duplicia: primo, facta seu creata; Secundo, operationes [2]in illis factis. Sicut differunt agere et facere, agibilia et factibilia, acta [3]et facta, actus et facturę. Et si versus loquitur de primo et visibili mundo, [4]tunc sensus est, Quod in illis Actis et factis mystice intellexerit acta et [5]facta noui et spiritualis mundi, que est Ecclesia. Cuius facture sunt [6]singuli fideles creati in Christo, Eph. 2. et Iaco. 1."

WA 55, II, 156, 18-23: "[18] Arguit ergo eos hic propheta, Quod Intelligentiam 'operum Dei' [19] non habent, i. e. ignorant et ignorare volunt Iustitiam Dei et suam [20] statuere querunt. Similiter 'opera manuum eius', Ecclesiam, que est [21] 'noua creatura' Dei, 'non intelligunt', i. e. non credunt. Sed nec opera [22] prioris creature intelligunt, Sicut Isaię 66.: 'Que est ista Domus' etc. [23] 'facta sunt hec, dicit Dominus."

WA 55, II, 401, 516-518: "Secundo in gratuitis perceptis, scil. sacramentis et bonis [517] Ecclesie, Que non minus tibi ministrat, quam totus mundus, cum ipsa sit [518] mundus quidam intellectualis."

WA 55, II, 718, 2-17: "[2] Licet autem de operibus creationis possit exponi, Aptius tamen exponitur [3] de noua creatione, que est Ecclesia in Christo. Eph. 2.: 'Ipsius enim [4] factura sumus creati in operibus bonis' etc. Et Galat. 6.: 'In Christo enim [5] Ihesu neque circuncisio aliquid valet neque preputium, Sed noua creatura.' [6] Et Iacob. 1.: 'Vt simus initium aliquid creature eius.' Apoc. 21.: 'Ecce [7] noua facio omnia.' Et quod hec sit intentio psalmi, patet ex hoc:[8] 91, 3 Primo Quia **misericordiam et veritatem** dicit opera ista esse, que [9] nuncianda et laudanda sunt. Sed misericordia et veritas sunt de noua [10] creatura. [11] 91, 7 Secundo Quia dicit, quod **Insipiens ipsa non cognoscet**. Quod exinde [12] fit, Quia opera et factura Christi Ecclesie non apparet aliquid esse foris, [13] Sed omnis structura eius est intus coram Deo Inuisibilis. Et ita non [14] oculis carnalibus, Sed spiritualibus in intellectu et fide cognoscuntur. Insipientes [15] autem eam contemunt, Quia sapiunt tantummodo speciosa foris, [16] vt sequitur: Cum exorti fuerint, q. d. factura tua non apparet ita et floret, [17] sicut illi volunt florere. [Et ideo Schandalisantur et offenduntur in il[la].]"

WA 57, b197, 20-23: "Tertio alii cum Apostolo hoc loco [21] tabernaculum intelligunt mundum quendam spiritualem, quae est Ecclesia [22] sancta Dei. Et ita [sanctum] sanctorum est Ecclesia triumphans, sanctum [23] Ecclesie militans, atrium Synagoga"

See also WA 55, I, 684 gloss 5; WA 55, II, 510, 103-111; WA 2, 614, 28-36.

<sup>250</sup> See especially *De arca noe morali* IV, 7 (PL 176, 672D): "Sicut duo opera, id est opera conditionis, et opera restaurationis distinximus, ita duos mundos esse intelligamus visibilem, et invisibilem. Visibilem quidem hanc machinam universitatis, quam corporeis oculis cernimus, invisibilem vero cor hominis, quod videre non possumus." See also *De sacramentis* I, 2; 28. Luther might refer to Hugh by name in the *Dictata* at WA 55, I, 676 gloss 4 when discussing the difference between temporal and spiritual goods, so there may be some relationship. It is however ambiguous which Hugh Luther is referring to. The editor of WA 55, I

According to Luther's explanation of Ps. 76 in *Dictata* the works of God during the phases of this history of salvation can be arranged in the following way:

However let us note what this psalm cuts open before it cuts off: 'The works of God are threefold'.

The general works are all the works of the creatures. And these have been shown to all people so that they should remember them, give thanks and think of God and so serve their Creator. For thus the Apostle argues in Romans 1 especially regarding the Gentiles. And also in the Old Law the holy people recount them and bless the Lord in them.

Spiritually wonderful works are those shown to the people of Israel in Egypt, because the Lord wished that these would particularly be remembered, though after them he did more, different things. And this concerns especially the Jews, so that they would give thanks to God in them for the sake of the figure of future things.

The properly spiritual works are the works of redemption and justification, because these are most highly designated to all Christians. The works of the glorification are contained under these (*sub hiis comprehensa*), because they have not yet taken place so that they could be remembered, except in Christ the Head. These namely will be the most wonderful of all.<sup>251</sup>

Note that here Luther actually lists *four* different kinds of works of God. First, there are the works of the creation. Second, there are the spiritually wonderful works in the liberation of Israel, which are figures of future things. Third, there are the spiritual works of redemption and justification in Christ. Fourth, there are the works of glorification, contained and comprehended (*comprehensa*) under the former. These works have not yet come to be, except in Christ.

The distinctions Luther makes here are connected with Luther's method of Biblical interpretation and the medieval theory of the four senses of Scripture (Quadrigea).<sup>252</sup> In his interpretation of the same Psalm Luther also outlines the following distinctions concerning the works of God:

1. Works of Creation;
2. Spiritual works of the people of Israel;
3. Works of Redemption

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suggests the postill of Hugh of Saint Cher (Hugo Cardinalis), but the quotation does not contain the idea that the temporal things would only touch one side.

<sup>251</sup> WA 55, II, 506, 3 – 507, 18: "[3] Veruntamen, Vt notemus, quod incidit, antequam excidat: Triplicia [4] 76, 12 sunt 'opera Dei'.

[5] Generalia sunt omnia opera creature. Et hec ostensa sunt [6] omnibus hominibus, vt illorum memores sint, gratias agant et cognoscant [7] Deum ac sic seruiant creatori earum. Sic enim Apostolus Ro. 1. disputat, [8] precipue tamen gentibus. Vnde et in vet[er]i lege sancti sepius ea allegant [9] et benedicunt in illis Dominum.

[10] Spiritualiter sunt opera mirabilia populo Israel ostensa in [11] Egypto. Quia illa voluit Dominus singulariter memorari, licet postea plura [12] alia f[ec]erit. Et hec proprie pertinent ad Iudeos, vt in illis Deo gratias [13] agant propter figuram futurorum.

[14] Propriissime Sunt opera spiritualia redemptionis et Iustificationis. [15] Quia hec summe commendata sunt omnibus Christianis. Opera [16] autem glorificationis sunt sub hiis comprehensa, Quia nondum facta, vt [17] possint memorari, nisi in capite Christo. Hec enim erunt omnium mirabilissima."

<sup>252</sup> On the Quadrigea in general, see Lubac 1959-64.

As seen before, the works of redemption contain more than merely their historical fulfillment in Christ. Therefore in his view they can be understood in four senses, which correspond to the medieval senses of Scripture:

1. Literally, as having been realized in the person of Christ
2. Tropologically, as taking place in the soul against the flesh
3. Allegorically, in the world against evil
4. Anagogically, in Heaven and Hell<sup>253</sup>

In the same Psalm Luther lists yet a third scheme for distinguishing the works of God from each other:

The works of the Lord can be distinguished in yet another way so, that the first category are all the ancient works of the visible creatures, whether realized naturally or through miracles. Second, the works of Christ done for our sake and all the works of the New Creation i.e., the Church [or the whole New Creation, the Church] which is a spiritual and intellectual world. Third, the works of morals and faith in accordance with God. Fourth, the works of the future resurrection. So the first are literal, second allegorical, third tropological but the fourth anagogical. All these three can be read and seen in the first, namely the literal [by one who is spiritual].<sup>254</sup>

This third scheme resembles the second scheme summarized above, but the difference between them is that whereas Luther in the second scheme interprets the literal sense as pointing to Christ, here he refers to the visible creation and miracles as the literal sense. The difference between them seems to be accounted for by the consideration that Luther uses the term “literal” (*litera*, *literals*) in two ways. It can first point to the *letter as opposed to the spirit*, in which case the literal and historical works are the Creation and the

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<sup>253</sup> WA 55, II, 509, 61-73:

“{Primo opera Creationis  
 {Secundo opera  
 {spiritualia populi  
 {Israel  
 {Tercio opera  
 {redemptionis,

Et hec  
 quadrupliciter

{Primo literaliter in Christo personaliter  
 {facta  
 {Secundo Tropolo[gice eadem in  
 {anima contra carnem  
 {Tercio Allegorice in mundo contra  
 {malos  
 {Quarto Anagogice in celo et et  
 {inferno.”

<sup>254</sup> WA 55, II, 510, 103-111: “[103] BI 122 Possunt et aliter distingui opera Domini, Vt primum membrum [104] sint omnia opera creature visibilia siue in natura siue miraculo olim facta. [105] 3, 533 | Secundum opera Christi pro nobis facta et totius creature nouę [106] i. e. Ecclesie [Vel tota noua creatura Ecclesia], que est mundus Spiritualis [107] et intellectualis. Tercium opera Moralia et fidei secundum Deum facienda. [108] Quartum opera future resurrectionis. Et ita prima sunt litera, [109] Secunda allegoria, Tercia Tropolo[gia, Quarta autem Anagogia. [110] Vnde et in primis, scil. literalibus, omnia ista tria legere [111] et videre potest [qui spiritualis est].”



Law which do not contain the spirit. Second, it can point to the *literal as historical*, in which case the properly spiritual (but at the same time historical) works of Christ in redemption constitute the first spiritual sense of Scripture.<sup>255</sup> Thus Luther in the *Commentary on Galatians* (1516/17) reduces the four senses to two – the letter and the spirit – while still intermittently continuing to distinguish among the four different senses.<sup>256</sup>

Returning to the works of God, the above three schemes of Luther can be summarized into one as follows: First all three include the works of the visible creation. Then Luther names the miraculous spiritual works accomplished during the liberation from Egypt, which are figures of future things. Third, there are the properly spiritual works of redemption begun in Christ, which constitute the beginning of the New Creation. Under these works of redemption are hidden the works of the fourth kind, the future glory. In addition we can note two principles of interpretation. First, for Luther the visible creation and the Old Testament bear witness to the spiritual works of redemption in Christ. Second, this relationship can however only be understood by the spiritual person in Christ, because the spiritual senses of the scripture open only through Christ. The defining criterion among these stages of the Creation and the New Creation is that the creation and miracles performed on behalf of Israel point to Christ as signs of absent things. They do not contain the reality to which they point, but are empty and transitory.<sup>257</sup> Of these signs the created world is a general sign, known to all. The miracles of Israel, on the other hand, are a specific sign of promised future things, a sign known only to Israel. This latter sign can be called spiritual because it refers to specific spiritual things and is an image of them, but it is not properly spiritual because it does not yet grant the things to which it points.<sup>258</sup> Therefore both are visible signs pointing to the invisible, but neither one gives that which they point to. Thus they can also be considered as one single stage, separate from the New Creation by being a sign the content of which is absent. The New Creation of the invisible world begins in Christ and the works of the Apostles and is actualized in the Church. Therefore, the things of the Church are properly spiritual effective signs or means of grace which participate in and communicate the reality to which they point. However, in the Church Militant this invisible reality is still hidden.<sup>259</sup> In the works of Glory (in the

<sup>255</sup> The same basic idea is expressed by Grane 1997, 176-178. According to Steinmetz 1980 Nicholas of Lyra, whom Luther often refers to, used a double literal sense: literal-historical and literal-prophetic. According to the latter also the Christological reading of the Psalm can be called the historical sense.

<sup>256</sup> See WA 55, I, 2-4; 343, 145-155; WA 55, II, 904, 375-382; WA 57, a95, 22 – a96, 25; WA 2, 550, 17 – 552, 19.

<sup>257</sup> WA 55, I, 468-469 gloss 7; 547 glosses 5-6; WA 55, II, 342, 126-140; 822, 628-641.

<sup>258</sup> WA 57, a69, 1-6; a96, 15-20.

<sup>259</sup> WA 55, II, 247, 201-208: “Quia illud est officium legis, hoc [202] gratiæ. Lex enim non habet opera salutis, Sed tantum verba et signa operum [203] futurorum. Quæ cum Iudei nolint esse signa, remanent in lege et peccatis [204] et dicunt solum signa et vacua verba Deo; Christiani autem faciunt [205] Deo et implent opera legis Deo. Propheta autem, medius inter vtrosque, [206] dicit opera sua Deo. Igitur omnia dicta et facta legis sunt velut verba et signa [207] tantum, verba autem et facta Euangelii sunt opera et res ipsa significata.”

WA 55, II, 524, 509 – 525, 524: “Necesse enim est, vt omnia opera, que in sanctis [510] operatur, sint magna et mirabilia, Quia sunt figurata [511] per mirabilia et magna. Quod si litera et moritura ac [512] transitoria fuerunt mirabilia, quanto magis eorum veritas [513] et res significate erunt mirabilis et magne! Sed Quia [514] ista fuerunt sensibilia, ideo putabantur et ore carnis [515] laudabantur. Hic autem dicit, quod intus de illis tractabit, scil. in spiritu, [516] spiritualia eorum intuendo, Vbi oculi carnis ea videre nequeunt.

Church Triumphant) the invisible reality will no longer be hidden but will be present and manifest.<sup>260</sup> All the stages moreover share the same *signatum* (Christ), but the manner of signification differs. In the first stage, the *signatum* was wrapped under the deepest amount of figures and shadows. In the stage of the Church, the *signatum* is still partially veiled but also partially known, and the number of the signs is smaller. In the coming Glory the *signatum* is known immediately in union with the one divine Word, Christ.<sup>261</sup> Thus the relation of the stages to each other can be understood by means of a Platonist ontological hierarchy. All existing things contain a causal connection to their source, which makes them signs, but the plurality of created things increases the more ontologically distinct they are from their source, and their expressive power is respectively weakened.

### 2.3.3. The Relationship of the Visible and Invisible World

#### 2.3.3.1 Their General Nature

Luther's slightly different portrayals of the works of God fall into one scheme, when one takes the fundamental distinction between the visible and the invisible (the Creation and the New Creation) as the starting point. Between these two lies the Church, in which the visible creation becomes a participant of the invisible. For Luther, the whole creation is a

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Et [517] quid moramur? Omnia olim facta mirabilia Vsque hodie fiunt per fidem; [518] fides enim cecos illuminat, claudos stabilit, surdos audire facit. Sicut Dominus [519] minus In Euangelio nunquam fecit mirabile, nisi prius fidem illorum [520] haberet, vt scil. non solum vmbratile, Sed et verum mirabile faceret. [521] Sic enim Marci vlt[imo]: 'Signa autem eos, qui credunt in me' Et Matt. XI.: [522] 'Ceci vident.' Et vere magnum est animam sanare et Iustificare, vt omnia [523] visibilia contemnat et celestia speret. Magna magnalia! Sed quia hec [524] virtus occulta est in spiritu [...]"

See also WA 55, I, 468-469 gloss 7; WA 55, II, 341, 94 – 342, 121; 531, 686 – 532, 709; 718, 11-17; 855, 88-96; WA 2, 530, 1-17.

<sup>260</sup> WA 55, II, 1019, 121-127.

<sup>261</sup> WA 55, II, 253, 370 – 254, 393: "[370] Sciendum Itaque, Quod verbum Dei triplici modo dicitur et reuelatur. Primo [371] a Deo patre in sanctis, in gloria et in seipso. Secundo in sanctis in hac [372] vita in spiritu. Tercio per verbum externum et linguam ad aures hominum. [373] BI 59 Et sic est velut in tertium vas \* transfusum. Et hoc est figuratum [374] per hoc, Quod olim 'Deus locutus est in prophetis et patribus', Et sic [375] mediante homine factum est velum literę et paries medius. Postea 'locutus [376] est in filio'; hoc adhuc est in velamento, Sed tamen secundum. Tandem [377] pater ipse in Cęlo loquetur nobis in seipso, cum nobis verbum suum [378] ipse sine vllo medio reuelabit, vt audiamus et videamus et beati simus. [379] Atque sicut prima locutus multis figuris et vmbris fuit Inuoluta, [380] que omnia in vno Christo implentur et Inueniuntur, Quia quicquid in lege [381] tam multis verbis et factis agitur, totum vnus Christus habet in veritate, [382] Sic enim 'verbum consummans et abbreviatum fecit Dominus', Vt que [383] ibi multis aguntur, hic vna fide scil. et Charitate expleantur et cesset [384] onerosa multitudo legum. Ita in futuro erit Deus idem vnusque omnia in [385] omnibus. Et tam multa, quibus nunc sub Christo etiam vtimur et egemus, [386] scil. gratis et donis, que sunt per multa olim carnalia significata (Nunc [387] enim pauca sunt ceremonialia, immo nulla fere de necessitate Euangelii, [388] nisi 7 sacramenta, que olim erant plurima, Sed tamen spiritualiter ista remanent [389] et adhuc sunt multa), et tunc omnia ista pater vno nobis verbo [390] prestabit, Quia 'cum apparuerit gloria eius, tunc satiabitur', Et tamen [391] vnico et simplicissimo verbo suo satiabit nos. Sicut modo in spiritu vnica [392] ceremonia, scil. sacramento, omnia tribuit, que olim multis carnalibus et [393] imperfecte, i. e. signo, dedit."

See also WA 55, I, 486 gloss 7, 4-10; WA 55, II, 119, 20 – 120, 2.

general sign of the invisible. However, the nature of the Church as the beginning of the invisible creation and as the nexus where the invisible and the visible world meet makes the Church a special kind of sign. For Luther, the Church is a theological sign which participates in the reality it signifies. Thus only at this point of the discussion, can one return to the question of the exact relation between the creaturely signs and the invisible reality signified by them. The determination of the location of the Church between the invisible and the visible world was necessary for the next step of the argument of this study.

The fundamental distinction for Luther is between visible and invisible things. Luther describes their opposing nature in a very platonic fashion, but also using terms derived from biblical language. For Luther, the visible world and its sensible, apparent and present things are flowing, fluctuating and transitory, offering no solid ground (as in the parable of the two men who built their houses on the rock and on the sand in *Matthews 7:24-27*). They are finite; thus the one who loves them will find no permanent satisfaction in them. They are empty and vain by their nature, because they are not the actual reality. They are only a sign of that reality and its covering. As such, they cannot fill and embrace the soul. They merely touch the surface, and respectively the one who loves them only touches the surface of things, not their core. Visible and sensible goods titillate the soul and offer the illusion of pleasure, but provide more sorrow than enjoyment when they are consumed. Because they are vain and empty instead of solid, loving them is a heavy and endless burden. One who loves them becomes fluctuating and vain. They scatter the soul, whereas the spiritual and invisible goods gather and unite the soul. Thus a love of the visible things is analogous to a crooked path, whereas the spiritual goods offer the soul steady direction. Visible and sensible things are opposed to intelligible and invisible things such, that the former are letter and the latter, spirit. Thus visible things can only be used in a good manner when they are not taken for and sought as the ultimate reality. They are a figure and shadow of things to come, a changeable and fleeting shadow which offers no permanent protection. Invisible things, on the other hand, are stable and solid, immutable and unfailing. They are infinite and eternal, and thus offer permanent enjoyment and satisfaction. They are the actual reality, prefigured in many signs and hidden under visible things as their true content and core. They are subtle but broad, present everywhere but graspable only internally and spiritually. They dilate the soul, whereas the visible and present things contract it. They seem less tempting than the visible, but offer more pleasure when they are enjoyed. They offer pleasure which never ends, because they are not consumed when they are loved. They are solid and fill the soul with permanent satisfaction, gathering it into one. They are the direct way, which instructs the soul morally. They are spirit instead of letter, the ultimate reality instead of a sign and figure. They offer permanent protection and cover instead of a fleeting shadow. These invisible things are, in their nature, properly spiritual goods (as is also in some sense the human being insofar he or she is spiritual). That is, they flow from God and in their essence are participation in Christ the divine Word and Wisdom. Through them, the Lord himself is grasped and embraced.<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> See WA 55, I, 274 gloss 6; 520 gloss 20; 547 gloss 5; 555 gloss 29; 676 gloss 4; 680, 3-22; 681 glosses 18-21; 684 gloss 5; WA 55, II, 66, 15 – 67, 19; 115, 16 – 116, 11; 119, 20-23; 152, 13-22; 154, 7-12; 206, 47 – 207, 67; 213, 124 – 214, 151; 218, 98-101; 247, 223 – 248, 230; 305, 124 – 306, 137; 341, 94-100;

There appears to be some development, however, in Luther's interest in the relationship of the visible and invisible things. Most of the discussion of their nature occurs in the *Dictata*, though the basic idea continues in Luther's later writings.<sup>263</sup> There also seems to be a change of emphasis in how Luther views this relationship. That is, visible things come to be contrasted by Luther to the invisible things from two slightly differing viewpoints. On the one hand, the visible things stand in contrast to the invisible things through their general nature as described above (i.e., fleeting vs. eternal, empty vs. solid, finite vs. infinite). On the other hand Luther often furthermore opposes the visible bad with the invisible good (and vice versa). Thus it is not only the general nature of visible things (which is in contrast to the nature of invisible, spiritual goods) that prevents the human being from recognizing the spiritual good. In addition the spiritual good is even more deeply hidden under its contraries, that is, under the visible bad (as the basic idea of the Theology of the Cross), so that God hiding under his contraries in the visible badness and suffering could be exceedingly profound and miraculous.<sup>264</sup> Luther discusses the first, metaphysical opposition in most length at the *Dictata*,<sup>265</sup> but the second one also occurs there frequently.<sup>266</sup> In the later writings the latter opposition (e.g. hiddenness under contraries) comes to the forefront,<sup>267</sup> but also the first one also remains.<sup>268</sup> At the same time, Luther's use of the idea of the Creation and Old Covenant as prefigurations occurs less, though also it continues to be used by him intermittently. This trend is connected with Luther's growing suspicion, over time, towards allegory in general.<sup>269</sup> Therefore, Luther's starting position seems to be more Augustinian, but his ideas (or at least their treatment in the texts) develop in the direction of a more traditionally 'Lutheran' understanding.<sup>270</sup> It is important to note, however, that at the same time this development takes place the fundamental distinction between the spiritual and carnal and the invisible and visible goods, persists. The spiritual things are continuously portrayed as invisible, infinitely good, inexhaustible, solid, directing the soul, offering permanent joy. Now, however, Luther ascribes their nature even more fundamentally only to the spiritual goods accessed through faith in Christ.

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342, 126 – 343, 144; 427, 53-57; 495, 149-164; 622, 268-273; 626, 402 – 627, 412; 628, 430-445; 654, 306 – 655, 323; 682, 75 – 683, 78; 687, 36 – 688, 69; 825, 723-729; 848, 225 – 849, 235; 862, 296 – 863, 310; 879, 161-171; 949, 1650 – 950, 1682; 955, 1844 – 956, 1865; 983, 2641 – 984, 2667; 995, 2989-2999; WA 56, 75, 9-15; 406, 16 – 407, 32; 445, 2-5; 461, 3-9; WA 57, b85, 3-7; b214, 2 – b215, 13; b228 – b229, 5; AWA 2, 79, 1-11; 106, 18 – 107, 13; 181, 16 – 182, 4; 206, 7 – 208, 18; WA 5, 417, 9 – 419, 21; 445, 27-38; 541, 6-12.

See also Hunzinger 1905, 5-8. However Hunzinger is certainly wrong when he suggests that the invisible reality would also have a 'personal' existence, except when human beings and angels are considered.

<sup>263</sup> As evidenced by the previous footnote. Also Joest 1967, 89-91; 100 agrees with that the use of terminology continues through the whole period.

<sup>264</sup> On God hiding under contraries see also chapter 2.2.4.3.

<sup>265</sup> E.g. WA 55, II, 66, 15 – 67, 19; 342, 126 – 343, 144; 628, 430-445; 654, 306 – 655, 323; 687, 36 – 688, 69; 955, 1844 – 956, 1865.

<sup>266</sup> E.g. WA 55, II, 247, 223 – 248, 230; 258, 26-36; 282, 62 – 283, 83; 341, 94-111; 718, 20 – 719, 43; 943, 1469-1480.

<sup>267</sup> E.g. WA 56, 392, 17 – 393, 20; 461, 3-9; WA 2, 456, 29 – 457, 29; AWA 2, 61, 6-16; 106, 18 – 108, 5; 178, 17 – 181, 15; WA 5, 417, 9 – 419, 21.

<sup>268</sup> E.g. WA 56, 406, 16 – 407, 32; AWA 2, 206, 7 – 207, 18; WA 5, 557, 19-32.

<sup>269</sup> E.g. WA 56, 406, 24 – 407, 2; AWA 2, 360, 8 – 361, 9; WA 5, 541, 6-17; 583, 11-21.

<sup>270</sup> The same development towards a more paradoxical hiddenness is noticed by Cranz 1959, 5-6; 19-21.

With regard to the discussion of Luther and ontology, it is also very important to note that Luther does not use only one category of pairs of opposites: the different opposites are not commensurate. He uses different pairs of opposites for different purposes. The first pair of opposites discussed here is properly *metaphysical*. They concern the composition of the universe: transitory and temporal vs. eternal; visible vs. invisible; stabile vs. fluctuating; image, shadow, sign and figure vs. truth; contracting vs. dilating; dividing vs. uniting. At the same time, they are *theological* (instead of the philosophical interest which Luther condemns), because the reality they describe is spiritual and divine. The second pair (invisible good vs. visible bad) builds upon the first. Only the contrast between the opposites is strengthened: The invisible reality stands not only in opposition to the visible, but it is dually or exceedingly hidden under contraries.

### 2.3.3.2 *Can they be Interpreted Non-Ontologically?*

A third pair of the opposites also exists in Luther's thought, however. This pair is not metaphysical, although it is based on the distinctions of the first pair. In the case of this pair, the quality of the person and his or her love becomes the defining criterion. Here the basic concept is emptiness or vanity (*vanitas*): The one who loves other things instead of God becomes vain and empty.<sup>271</sup> In his analysis of Luther's ontology, the prominent scholar Gerhard Ebeling, takes this third pair of opposites as the key of interpretation and examines the others through it. Ebeling claims that the metaphysical attributes discussed above do not actually speak about the nature of things, but rather about the quality of the person who loves them. As such they are not ontological but, as Ebeling states, "existential". Thus, in Ebeling's view Luther does not speak about the nature of *things* in the analysed texts, but rather about the nature of the *person*. Luther's criticism of quiddities is adduced in support this interpretation.<sup>272</sup> The "metaphysical" attributes of things would therefore carry only a metaphorical meaning: everything outside of Christ is "vanity" in the sense that it has no significance for the salvation of the person.<sup>273</sup>

An analysis of Luther's use of ontological terms, however, suggests that Ebeling is mistaken in his interpretation. One can interpret Luther's use of the idea of participation as Ebeling does if one does not distinguish between the first, second and third groups. Ebeling's interpretation might be at least partially applicable to the terms which describe the quality of things, such as the concept of *vanitas* (the primary term Luther uses in this manner). It may also be valid for the adjectives *fluctuating* and *solid*. However, it cannot be applied to all of the aforementioned terms in the first and second groups. Most importantly the distinctions between sign and reality, prefiguration and its fulfillment, and shadow and truth do not appear to fall under Ebeling's scheme. Luther does not use these terms to refer to people, but rather to created things and events of the biblical narrative, so that earlier events point to latter events as their sign. This fact shows that Luther's

<sup>271</sup> E.g. WA 55, I, 274 gloss 6; 520 gloss 20; WA 55, II, 66, 15 – 67, 19; 305, 114 – 306, 137; 865, 13 – 866, 28; WA 56, 12, 3-13; 178, 24 – 179, 25; 241, 1-25; 445, 1-5; AWA 2, 177, 8 – 178, 12; 291, 11 – 292, 3; WA 5, 650, 36 – 651, 14.

<sup>272</sup> On this criticism in Luther's texts, see chapter 2.3.1

<sup>273</sup> Ebeling 1951, 187-197.

terminology is more than simply personalist and existential: this category of events does not refer to persons at all. Rather, this category is defined by essential and temporal or eschatological distinctions between the empty historical sign, present hiddenness under contraries, and the future New Creation in which the thing signified is manifest.<sup>274</sup> Second, with regard to the third group of opposites it is true that Luther states that the created things are not *vanitas* in themselves, but are so because of the emptiness of the person living in them.<sup>275</sup> However, Ebeling's interpretation of the text does not take into account the fact that behind it lies Luther's application of the Augustinian doctrine of love (i.e., the distinction between *usus* and *fruitio*). In several analogous passages Luther clarifies, that it is the perverse *fruitio* of created things as the ultimate end which is the problem. Created things are good in their own right when they are not taken as the ultimate reality (i.e., enjoyed in the sense of *fruitio*). They should be taken as signs and viewed and used with respect to the God as the ultimate end to which they point, not in place of him.<sup>276</sup> When they are loved as if they were an ultimate end in themselves, the one that loves them becomes like them. Luther states that love conforms one to its object.

<sup>274</sup> So also Grane 1997, 170-171; 183-190.

<sup>275</sup> WA 55, II, 214, 98-101: "[98] **Omnia vanitas**. Sensus: Quod 'omnia sunt vanitas', non ipsorum est, [99] Sed hominis vane vtentis. Igitur esse vanitatis in illis est esse hominis [100] vani et vti eiusdem. Et sic vere omnia existentia 'vanitas', in quantum [101] 'vanitas' sunt ipse homo viuens et non ipsa."

Cf. Ebeling 1951, 190-191.

<sup>276</sup> WA 55, I, 520 gloss 20: "GLOSSA:<sup>20</sup> [1]Mira sententia: 'Deiecisti, dum eleuarentur'. Quia Eleuari hocipsum [2]est deiici. Et 'propter dolos [3]posuisti eis'. Vel vt Hiero[nymus: 'In lubrico posuisti eos'. Burg[ensis: 'In dolis posuisti eos'. Quomodo simul stant [4]'poni' et 'in lubrico'? Sensus ergo est: 'positionem' eorum, qua putant se [5]firmiter stare, facis, vt sit 'lubricum', dolus et infida positio; ponuntur [6]enim secundum carnem. Sed hoc ipsum est in lubrico eos esse secundum [7]spiritum. Quare 'propter dolos', scil. falsam prosperitatem, quam sibi [8]eligunt spreta tua felicitate; 'posuisti eis', i. e. positionem dedisti ad [9]voluntatem eorum. Quia faciunt creaturam, que bona est, sibi vanam et [10]dolosam, dum eam sibi statuunt finem vltimum, cum sit species et figura [11]vltimi finis. Qui enim speciem pro re, picturam pro natura, signum pro [12]significato voluntarie aliis offert, dolum facit eis. Quod si idem sibi [13]fecerit, in seipsum quoque dolosus erit. Aug[ustinus: 'fraudem patiuntur, [14]dum eligunt terrena et propter ea æterna relinquunt'."

WA 56, 178, 24 – 179, 1: "[24] Vide ergo ordinem et gradus perditionis. Primus est Ingratitudo [25] seu omissio gratitudinis. Sic enim Lucifer ingratus fuit Creatori suo, [26] antequam caderet. Quod facit ipsa complacentia sui, qua in acceptis non [27] vt acceptis delectatur pretermisso eo, qui dedit. Secundus Vanitas, [28] Quia scil. in seipso et in creatura pascitur et fruitur vtibili et ita necessario [29] vanus fit 'in cogitationibus suis' i. e. omnibus consiliis, studiis et Industriis. [30] Quia quicquid in iis et per hæc querit, totum vanum est, cum non nisi seipsum [1] Bl. 36. querat i. e. gloriam, delectationem et vtilitatem suam."

WA 56, 373, 27 – 374, 12: "[26] **Vanitati enim subiecta est [8, 20]**. [27] 'Creature' nomine hoc loco plurimi intelligunt hominem, Quod scil. [28] ipse cum omni creatura participat. Sed melius per 'vanitatem' intelligitur [29] homo, quemadmodum et proprie et verissime dicit psalmo 38.: [30] 'Veruntamen Vniuersa vanitas omnis homo viuens.' Verissimum enim [31] est, Quod si homo | vetus | non esset, nulla vanitas esset. Quia omnia, [32] quæ fecit Deus, 'erant valde bona', et sunt vsque modo bona, vt Apostolus [1] 1. Timot. 4.: 'omnis Creatura Dei bona est.' Et Tit. 2.: 'Omnia munda [2] mundis.' Fit ergo sine suo vitio et extrinsece vana, mala, noxia etc. Sic [3] scil., Quod opinione et erronea estimatione seu amore et fruitione peruersa [4] ab homine reputatur altius, quam est in veritate, dum homo, [5] qui Dei capax est et solo Deo saturari potest, | quoad mentem, spiritum, | [6] presumit in rebus hanc quietem et sufficientem habere. Huic ergo vanitati [7] subiecta est creatura (i. e. peruerse fruitioni), Sicut fenum in se res bona [8] Bl. 97b. et non vana est, Iumentis \* bonum, necessarium et vtile, Sed homini [9] ad cibum est vanum et inutile, Et si in cibum hominis sumeretur, altius [10] et dignius haberetur, quam est sua natura. Sic faciunt omnes, qui Deum [11] non purissime diligunt et feruenter sitiunt. Quod facit omnis homo, [12] qui ex Adam natus est et sine spiritu sancto viuunt." See also AWA 2, 172, 9 – 174, 13; 177, 1 – 178, 12.

Thus, unlike Hunzinger 1905, 10-13 claims, the temporal is not the complete opposite of the spiritual. When taken in the correct light they point to Christ and spiritual reality. So also Grane 1997, 171-175.

Therefore the person becomes empty, vain, fluctuating and divided into many. The quality of the object that is loved as *fruitio* determines the nature of the person in Luther's thought, not vice versa.<sup>277</sup> Thus it seems clear that Luther's use of these concepts has an underlying ontological framework from which the objects' qualities, participated in through love, are derived. The derived qualities such as emptiness, fluctuosity and plurality (vs. truth, solidity and unity) are best understood in the framework of an Augustinian concept of the will as movement which can find rest only when it participates in the eternal movement of God, from which spiritual goods flow and to whom as the ultimate end they direct the will.<sup>278</sup>

### 2.3.3.3 *The Three Stages as the Key: Visible Creation, Church, Heavenly Glory*

In addition to Ebeling's personalist interpretation, Wilfrid Joest emphasizes the idea that the opposite pairs of concepts in Luther's thought are to be interpreted through the distinction of present and future things, but only in a temporal, not ontological, manner. Thus the invisible world that faith looks into is the future and the promises of God, not any spiritual 'overworld' (*Überwelt*). In such cases where Luther speaks about the participation of the invisible in the visible, he means that that faith already sees the present condition of the actual world as oriented towards the future, existentially open to the action of God.<sup>279</sup> This reading can be supported by numerous passages in which Luther speaks about *spes* and *res*, *spes futurorum*, *contemptus presentium* and about faith as *testimonium*, *signum* and *argumentum rerum non apparentium*; *substantia rerum*

<sup>277</sup> WA 55, II, 866, 23-28: "Quia principiis et primis affectibus [24] peruersis sequitur et sequentes peruerti. Et hec est tota vanitas, Quod [25] amorem et timorem ponunt in temporalia, que amari et timeri non [26] debent. Ideo vani, immo miseri sunt; Vani quidem propter amorem, quo [27] delectantur false, Et miseri propter timorem, quo vexantur false."

WA 55, II, 879, 161-171: "[161] 113b, 8 **Similes fiant illis**. Prophetice dicit primo, quia non natura, Sed similitudine [162] fiunt et ipsi Simulachra et Idola, Zach. XIII.: 'O pastor et Idolum', [163] Quia vani sunt. Hec autem omnia facit Amor mirabilis in viribus suis, qui [164] transmutat amantem in amatum, sicut b. Aug[ustinus] dicit: 'terram diligis, [165] terra es; aurum diligis, Aurum es; Deum diligis, Deus es'. [166] 4, 264 Inde fit, Vt qui fluentia diligit, fluat, et quocunque it res, amor sequens [167] cum eo vadit. Vnde fit, vt cum alicui aufertur pecunia, simul capitur [168] voluntas diligentis aurum. Quia se captiuum putat et perditum, quando [169] aurum perditur, Seque repertum, dum aurum reperitur. Quare? Nisi [170] quia aurum facta est voluntas per amorem auri. Si enim non diligeret [171] aurum, potius se liberari putaret, dum aufertur. Sic in aliis simili modo."

WA 56, 240, 31 – 241, 5: "[31] Istud 'Simul' collectivae capitur, ac si diceret: Omnes inutiles facti [1] sunt i. e. Vani et inutilia sectantes. Merito enim, qui inutilia querunt, [2] et ipsi 'inutiles' fiunt, Vani a vanis, sicut diuites a diuitiis, sic illi inutiles [3] ab inutilibus possessiue dicuntur. Quia qualia diligimus, tales efficimur. [4] Bl. 57. 'Deum diligis, Deus es; terram \*diligis, terra es', Ait b. Aug[ustinus]. [5] Amor enim vis est vnitiua ex amante et amato vnum quid constituens."

<sup>278</sup> As shown in chapters 2.2.1.-2.2.2. Ebeling 1951, 192-194, Joest 1967, 238-250 as well as Ozment 1969, 105-111 base their criticism on Luther's understanding of the concept of substance, especially the passages WA 55, II, 388, 137 – 389, 165 and WA 55, II, 416, 971-986. However, one should note that Luther's statement does not constitute a rejection of any substance-ontological or non-relational metaphysical system whatsoever, but is a grammatical treatment of what is meant in the Holy Scriptures by the term "substance". To draw general metaphysical conclusions based on these sections is too far-fetched and requires ignoring most of Luther's treatment of ontological questions, as argued in this chapter. So also Juntunen 1996, 416-426. On faith as the *substantia sperandorum*, see also chapter 3.4.1.

<sup>279</sup> So especially Joest 1967, 100-102. See also Ebeling 1951, 189-193; 226-227.

*futurarium* and so on.<sup>280</sup> Such texts could in theory be interpreted in a relational and anti-ontological manner so that the invisible world to which faith is directed only means the temporal future. But if this interpretation were true, it would be difficult to reconcile it with numerous contrary passages of Luther's texts, in which Luther (in a starkly different) manner speaks about faith and the gospel *already* having the *res* instead of the *species*: the reality instead of the sign and truth instead of shadow.<sup>281</sup>

Can these texts therefore be reconciled? How are they related to each other? The present study argues, that these texts are to be interpreted through the three (or four) stages of God's works in the world. Luther writes in comments on Psalm 44:2:

It must be known, that the Word of God is spoken and revealed in a threefold manner. First, by God the Father in the saints, in glory and in himself. Second, in the saints in this life in spirit. Third, through the external word and language for human ears. And thus it is as if it were poured into a third vessel. This is imaged through it that 'in the ancient times God has spoken in the prophets and the fathers', and so by human mediation the veil of the letter [*velum literę*], and intermediate wall is created. After that 'he has spoken in the Son'; this also is behind a veil [*in velamento*], but the second [veil]. Finally, the Father himself in Heaven will speak to us in himself, when he will reveal us his Word itself without any intermediary, so that we will hear it and be blessed. And as the first speaking was wrapped in many figures and shadows which were all fulfilled and discovered in one Christ, so whatever happens in the Law with so many words and actions, has one Christ as its whole truth. In this way 'the Lord summed up and abbreviated the word', so that what then happened through many things, now is fulfilled through one faith and love, so that the burdensome multitude of laws came to an end. And likewise in the future the same and only God will be all in all. And so the multiple things which we under Christ now use and need, namely graces and gifts, which were in the ancient times signified by many carnal things (but now the ceremonies are few, almost none except through the necessity of the Gospel the seven sacraments, while they in the ancient times were most numerous, but also in the spiritual sense those remain and are still many), the Father will then supply all these to us with one Word, since 'when his glory will appear we will be satisfied' and so he will with his one sole and simple Word satisfy us. In the same way he gives in spirit under one sole ceremony, the sacrament, everything which he in ancient times gave under many carnal ceremonies imperfectly, that is, in sign.<sup>282</sup>

<sup>280</sup> WA 55, I, 392 gloss 16; 574, 13-15; 695, gloss 12; 752, 4-5; 768, 25-26; 816 gloss 7; WA 55, II, 80, 29-32; 309, 8-10; 315, 151-157; 473, 262-270; 428, 99 – 429, 107; 600, 142-145; 652, 215-219; 692, 174-193; 780, 38-41; 887, 214 – 888, 251; 898, 217 – 225; 915, 692-699; 919, 836-839; 967, 2169-2191; 979, 2505-2508; 985, 2706-2709; 994, 2960-2962; 995, 2989-2999; 995, 3018-3022; WA 56, 43, 2-3; 49, 12-15; 371, 1 – 372, 25; 521, 14-20; 424, 27 – 425, 5; 445, 1-8; 522, 8-13; 523, 22-23; WA 57, b61, 8 – b62, 2; b138, 22 – b139, 10; AWA 2, 45, 31 – 46, 1; 425, 13-15; 617, 7-15; WA 5, 487, 12-14; 623, 17-23.

See also Bandt 1958, 49-50; Ebeling 1951, 199-201; Flogaus 1997, 347-348; Joest 1967, 244; Lohse 1995, 73-74; Schwarz 1962, 229-240.

<sup>281</sup> WA 55, I, 404 gloss 10; 520 gloss 20; WA 55, II, 67, 12-17; 247, 199-207; 342, 126-140; 495, 149-164; 524, 506-513; 535, 33 – 536, 40; 994, 2970-2973; WA 56, 43, 2-6; AWA 2, 294, 1-5; 455, 13-20.

<sup>282</sup> WA 55, II, 253, 370 – 254, 393: "[370] Sciendum Itaque, Quod verbum Dei triplici modo dicitur et reuelatur. Primo [371] a Deo patre in sanctis, in gloria et in seipso. Secundo in sanctis in hac [372] vita in spiritu. Tercio per verbum externum et linguam ad aures hominum. [373] BI 59 Et sic est velut in tertium vas \* transfusum. Et hoc est figuratum [374] per hoc, Quod olim 'Deus locutus est in prophetis et patribus', Et sic [375] mediante homine factum est velum literę et paries medius. Postea 'locutus [376] est in filio'; hoc



Thus in Luther's texts one can see three different stages of the history of salvation, which correspond to the works of God discussed in chapter 2.3.2. The first contains the visible creation and the Law (which can also be distinguished as two different stages). It is the nature of this stage that creation and the Law point to the final glory as signs of absent things. Furthermore, these signs are many and they are remote from the reality they signify. Thus Luther calls them the "first veil", the "veil of the letter" (with reference to the two veils of the Tabernacle). The second stage is that of the Church (Militant). In this stage invisible reality already breaks into and becomes enwrapped in visible reality. This action most profoundly occurs in the Incarnation. Through this change the first veil (the veil of the letter) is removed and the Spirit is given. But as in the Incarnation, so also in the Church invisible reality is still veiled and hidden as it was by the second veil of the Tabernacle. The humanity of Christ is the second veil, and the glory of God is therefore not yet seen, but heard and pointed to. At the same time, it is present. Thus the signs and testimonies of this stage already participate in the reality they give. They do not only point to it, as the signs of the Old Covenant did. However, the reality participated in is not yet apparent but concealed, not visible but invisible, and this participation is not yet full but partial and growing. The plurality of the signs in the first stage is now reduced to the sacraments, which perfectly demonstrate the ontological nature of this stage. If Luther's ontology were to be understood only in a relational manner as referring to future salvation, the distinction would be rendered meaningless between the signs of the Old Covenant (which merely point to the future) and the sacramental signs of the Church (which participate in their *signatum*). However, the sacraments in particular express the nature of the Church's participation in invisible reality, which is participation hidden under contraries. The third and last one of the stages is that of glory. There God is known without an intermediary, through his divine nature by the one essential Word, Christ. Here the second veil is removed, the divinity is no longer hidden and one can speak of vision instead of hearing and showing, and present things instead of absent things (or things only present in faith and hope).<sup>283</sup>

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adhuc est in velamento, Sed tamen secundum. Tandem [377] pater ipse in Cēlo loquetur nobis in seipso, cum nobis verbum suum [378] ipse sine vllo medio reuelabit, vt audiamus et videamus et beati simus. [379] Atque sicut prima locutio multis figuris et vmbris fuit Inuoluta, [380] que omnia in vno Christo implentur et Inueniuntur, Quia quicquid in lege [381] tam multis verbis et factis agitur, totum vnus Christus habet in veritate, [382] Sic enim 'verbum consummans et abbreviatum fecit Dominus', Vt que [383] ibi multis aguntur, hic vna fide scil. et Charitate expleantur et cesset [384] onerosa multitudo legum. Ita in futuro erit Deus idem vnusque omnia in [385] omnibus. Et tam multa, quibus nunc sub Christo etiam vtimur et egemus, [386] scil. gratiis et donis, que sunt per multa olim carnalia significata (Nunc [387] enim pauca sunt ceremonialia, immo nulla fere de necessitate Euangelii, [388] nisi 7 sacramenta, que olim erant plurima, Sed tamen spiritualiter ista remanent [389] et adhuc sunt multa), et tunc omnia ista pater vno nobis verbo [390] prestabit, Quia 'cum apparuerit gloria eius, tunc satiabimur', Et tamen [391] vnico et simplicissimo verbo suo satiabit nos. Sicut modo in spiritu vnica [392] ceremonia, scil. sacramento, omnia tribuit, que olim multis carnalibus et [393] imperfecte, i. e. signo, dedit."

<sup>283</sup> See also WA 55, II, 1019, 121 – 1020, 136: "Et aptissime dicit: 'Testimonium [122] Israel', Quia Ecclesia militans nondum est, quod futura est [123] triumphans, Sed est signum, figura, absconditum et omnino fidele testimonium [124] sui ipsius. Quia in enygmata est, quod futura est in specie; in [125] signo est, quod futura est in re; in absconso est, quod futura est in manifesto; [126] in fide est, quod futura est in visione; In testimonio est, quod futura [127] est in exhibitione; In promisso est, quod futura est in implezione. Sic enim [128] in omni artis opere, Si quid ab artifice paratur, videlicet Mensa, vestis, [129] domus, optime dici potest: Nondum hoc est Mensa, vestis, domus, etc., Sed [130] certissimum signum et testimonium, quod fieri fiet mensa, vestis, domus, cum [131] iam sit partim tale, Sed nondum perfectum. Ac sic

The concepts of *res* and *presentia* can therefore be understood in light of Luther's distinction between the two worlds, the visible and the invisible. Both worlds have their own proper *res*<sup>284</sup> as well as their own *visio* and *presentia*.<sup>285</sup> What is present and which is

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non alieno signo et [132] testimonio picto vel dicto testatur, quid sit futurum, Sed seipso. Ita Ecclesia [133] 4, 403 paratur modo, quia edificatur vt ciuitas. Et nondum | quidem est Ciuitas, [134] Sed pars et testimonium, quod sit futura ciuitas. Ita quidem nondum [135] est Israel, Sed fidele signum, quod erit Israel, quia paratur ad visionem [136] Dei et partim, scil. per fidem, eum videt."

WA 55, II, 1020, 161 – 192: "[161] Bl 271v 121, 5 **Quia illic sederunt sedes in Iudicio, sedes super domum** [162] **Dauid**. [163] Pulcherrimus Versus et pulcherrime exprimens proprietatem Ecclesie [164] militantis, si possem consequi explanando. Sed age, Dominus in nobis et [165] audeamus tentare. Hęc Vtique est differentia etiam alia a predictis Ecclesie [166] militantis a triumphante, Quod Sedes sunt in ipsa et manifeste sunt [167] (i. e. potestates et principatus Episcopatum, sacerdocii etc.), Sed sessor [168] ipse Christus non apparet estque absconditus per fidem et in fide, et [169] tamen in ipsis sedet et presens est, immo presentissimus, cum sint isti sedes [170] eius. [...] Idcirco tanquam coram Christo sedente [189] super suum thronum humiliari ex vero corde debere, non propter sedem, [190] Sed propter sedem Christi sine dubio Inuisibiliter ibi sedentis. Sicut figura [191] habet olim in propitiatorio, Vbi erat sedes Dei, et tamen Inuisibiliter [192] ibi erat; Ita et modo in Ecclesia sua sedet, que est sedes eius."

WA 55, II, 1024, 279-293: "Vocatur autem Ecclesia militans [280] domus Dauid propter humanitatem Christi. Quia nunc regnat Christus in quantum [281] homo et per fidem humanitatis sue, quam habet ex Dauid. Sed [282] in futuro tradet hanc domum Deo patri, Et ipse quoque subiectus erit [283] ei, qui subiecit ei omnia, Et erit domus Dei et regnum Dei, Vt iam non tantum [284] Christus homo in nobis, Sed et Christus Deus in nobis sit. Ideo enim [285] nunc participamus eum tantummodo, quia in humanitatis eius regno sumus, [286] que est pars Christi. Sed tunc totus Christus in nobis erit clare sine [287] Inuolucro humanitatis. Non quod nunc non sit Deus in nobis, Sed quod est [288] in nobis Inuolutus et incarnatus in humanitate. Tunc autem erit reuelatus [289] sicuti est. Nunc cognoscimus ex parte, tunc autem sicut et cognitus sum. [290] Nec quod humanitatem dimittet, Sed quod etiam diuinitatem suam ibi [291] latentem, quam nunc confuse et in enygma humanitatis eius videmus, [292] ostendet clare. Interim itaque sumus domus Dauid, Et Sedes sedent. Non [293] tantum autem, Sed et stant."

WA 57, b202, 8-18: "**Velum** primum, quod [9] erat ante sanctum, significabat absconsionem et fidem future Ecclesie, [10] futuri evangelii et futurorum sacramentorum, non enim Synagoga [11] cernebat haec praesentia. Ideo in passione Christi hoc ipsum fuit 'scissum [12] a summo usque deorsum', quia tunc Ecclesia prodiit et Synagoga desiit. [13] Secundum vero, quod fuit ante [sanctum] sanctorum, hanc nostrae [14] fidei absconsionem significat, in qua Christus homo regnat, quod similiter [15] auferetur, cum apparuerit in gloria. Sic cognoscimus Christum [16] P Bl. 114b (\*) secundum carnem et diuinitatem, sed non nisi per fidem, ut 2. Cor. 4.: [17] 'Nos autem revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes' (scilicet per fidem) [18] 'transformamur in eandem imaginem a claritate in claritatem.'"

AWA 1, 511, 11-14: "Et pulchre in isto versu definitio fidei describitur, quia est *lumen signatum super nos*. Quod ait *signatum*, indicat, quod sit signum et clausum adhuc novissimo velamen, licet sit *lumen* ad primum velamen."

<sup>284</sup> WA 55, II, 256, 463-475: "Veritas Est duplex: Scil. Operis contra Vmbram, vt figurę legis erant verissimę res, et tamen simul vmbre veritatis future et diuine, scil. Christi, Et adhuc sunt vmbre eterne glorie omnia temporalia."

WA 55, II, 692, 177-196: "Nam vt supra in [178] quodam loco dixi: Sicut res significata transit, ita et verba eam significantia [179] transire dicuntur. Verbum autem Christi non transit in eternum, quia [180] rem significat non transeuntem in eternum. Dupliciter ergo verba dicuntur [181] transitoria. Primo in seipsis, quia citissime abeunt et nihil remanet ex [182] illis. Sic est omnis homo carnalis, qui dies habet transitorios, ex quibus [183] nihil sibi remanet, postquam transierint. Et hec est ira in populum [184] Iudeorum, quam plorat propheta. Secundo Quia transitoria signant. Et [185] ita licet iteretur verbum idem sepius; tamen quia significatum transit, [186] ideo et ipsum quoque transit. Sic iterum carnalis transit velut verbum [187] transitorium, quia in transitorio heret. Et nihil relinquit sibi, Sed tamen [188] aliis, scil. qui intelligunt res significatas per verbum alias res, scil. futuras, [189] significare; hii enim ex vsu rerum temporalium, quem in malis [190] vident, discurrunt et audiunt futuras res, quas isti surdi non audiunt. [191] Quare litera et omnis figura totius legis est velut sermo quidam [192] transitorius. Spiritus autem in illa latens et per eam significatus est velut [193] sensus illius sermonis. Sed illi tantum sermonem, alii autem sensum [194] tenent; illi literam, isti spiritum; ideo illi transeunt cum litera transeunte, [195] isti permanent cum spiritu manente; illorum dies consumuntur sicut [196] sermo, istorum autem conseruantur sicut sensus post sermonem."

the *res* in both worlds is that which is immediately perceptible in that world: visible and sensual things for those who are sensual people, divine things for the saints enjoying the beatific vision. But at the same time *both* worlds find their opposite in each other: The divine reality seems like nothing to those who are carnal and sensual, and likewise visible and sensible things seem like mere shadow to those who understand their true *signatum* in Christ.<sup>286</sup> Moreover, the Church (Militant) already possesses the eternal *res* in faith but not in vision. It is present as a real sign and testimony participating in its *signatum*, but not yet apparently and visibly. Therefore Luther can say that faith already possesses (*habet*) the eternal *res*, but that it is not yet present. This apparent contradiction is solved by understanding that by “present” things Luther means visibly perceptible things. Luther means the same as when he says that the Church already possesses its *res*, but in a hidden way, not apparently. Luther emphasizes that he does not mean the future Church, but that the Church possesses the *res* already now.<sup>287</sup> Thus for Luther the Church is suspended between both worlds. It has left behind (or is in the process of leaving) the visible, and it already grasps the invisible, but in a hidden and internal manner.<sup>288</sup> It has not yet arrived at the heavenly vision, but this does not mean that its participation in the heavenly things would only be relational. Rather than being relational, it follows the incarnational principle, according to which the divine is present but hidden under contraries.<sup>289</sup> Luther’s view of the Church (Militant) specifically as the medium stage also means that he does not view the distinctions between the stages in too static a manner. It belongs to his concept of faith, that the believer is always in motion towards the future, from the letter to the spirit.

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<sup>285</sup> On the earthly goods see footnote 280. On the beatific vision see WA 55, I, 821 gloss 8; WA 55, II, 651, 213 – 652, 219; 1020, 148-157; WA 56, 182, 14-18; AWA 2, 470, 7-22.

<sup>286</sup> See e.g. WA 55, II, 495, 149-159 vs. WA 55, II, 995, 2991-2998.

<sup>287</sup> WA 55, II, 886, 184-193: “[184] 115, 10 **Credidi**. Intentio psalmi Est docere tantum spiritualia bona in [185] Christo expectare, et promissa in lege de spiritu et fide intelligenda esse, [186] non de re temporali, contra Insuperantiam carnalium Iudeorum, Qui fidem [187] respuunt et rem expectant. Rem inquam temporalium; Nam fides habet [188] rem eternam. Dicit ergo: [189] Credidi, i. e. fidem habui, et hec tota mea possessio, que est substantia, [190] i. e. possessio rerum sperandarum, non autem substantia rerum [191] presentium. Non ait ‘diues sum, potens sum et delicatus sum’. Quia vltra [192] hec omnia querit aliud et id allegat, quod presens non est, quod fide tantum [193] tenetur.”

WA 55, II, 961, 2005 – 962, 2015: “Vt [2006] psal[mo]: ‘Quam magna multitudo dulcedinis tue, quam abscondisti timentibus [2007] te! Perfecisti eis, qui sperant in te in conspectu filiorum hominum.’ Sed [2008] per contrarium: iis qui non sperant in te in conspectu hominum (i. e. sola [2009] BI 255 spe viuunt coram hominibus, Sed re ipsa volunt viuere \* coram eis), destruxisti [2010] potius, vt nihil Inueniant omnes viri diuitiarum. Sancti enim in conspectu [2011] hominum nihil habent nisi spem; ideo despiciuntur ab illis, qui habent [2012] rem in conspectu hominum. Sed dum sic sperant et spe viuunt coram hominibus, [2013] habent perfectam rem coram Deo. Quia Non ait ‘perficies eis qui sperant’, [2014] Sed qui presenter sperant, iis tu iam ab initio mundi preparasti regnum [2015] et perfecisti.”

WA 55, II, 989, 2831 – 990, 2842: “Sed fidelis populus [2831] spiritualia querit, que sunt in fide et euangelio nobis donata maxima, [2832] Ergo vt eloquia eius (in quibus omne bonum nobis contulit) non tantum [2833] audiat, Sed etiam meditetur et per incrementum sibi incorporet. Mira [2834] est enim hec petitio, Non nisi verba peti a Deo, non res, Sed signa rerum. [2835] Quis enim pro verbis tam anxie vnquam clamauit? Sed Quia in verbis per [2836] fidem abscondite sunt res non apparentes, Ideo habens Verba per fidem [2837] habet omnia, licet abscondite. Et ita patet, quod iste Versus petit literaliter, [2838] non futuram Ecclesiam nec eius bona, Sed presentem et eius bona, [2839] que non sunt nisi ipsum Euangelium gratie, quod est signum et verbum [2840] sperandarum rerum et non apparentium. Et tali cibo nos alit Christus.”

<sup>288</sup> WA 55, I, 315 gloss 7; WA 55, II, 654, 282 – 655, 316; 918, 787-794; 1006, 3315-3334; WA 57, b185, 1-8; b214, 2 – b215, 12; AWA 2, 106, 28 – 107, 13.

<sup>289</sup> So also Peura 2005, 199. See also Grane 1997, 185-189.

He can be always made more perfect (and thus never becomes completely holy in this life).<sup>290</sup> Luther calls this passage from this life to the invisible world a crossing (*transitus*) and passover (*phase*).<sup>291</sup> However, this process concerns not only the believer, but in a certain sense the entire universe.<sup>292</sup> To illustrate this cosmological model Luther uses the figure of the Tabernacle (which also functions for him as an illustration of the composition of the human being). The whole cosmological structure can thus be summarized by means of the image of the Tabernacle:

The Tabernacle of Moses has been explained in different ways by different commentators. Others use it to signify the universe, so that the 'Holy of Holies' would be the heavenly and invisible things themselves and 'the Cherubim' the angelic choirs themselves – wherefore it is frequently said in the Scripture of God: 'You who sit above the Cherubim'. 'The Holy' would signify the visible world, and the 'second veil' would be the starry heaven, 'the seven candlesticks' the seven planets, 'the table of the showbread' the four elements, etc. But this exposition, either more or less true, is still somewhat twisted and violent to the text.

Others rather wish to understand the Tabernacle tropologically as the minor world, that is, the human being [...]

<sup>290</sup> WA 55, II, 866, 47 – 867, 77; II, 909, 544 – 913, 673; 946, 1576 – 947, 1609; 973, 2349-2360; 974, 2376 – 975, 2403. Luther's views in these passages touch also doctrinal development in a rather surprising manner. Luther namely argues for the acceptance of the Immaculate Conception and the primacy of the bishop of Rome as well as against the 'Bohemians' (Hussites), on the basis of the principle that those who refuse to accept internal doctrinal development stick to the letter (!). He also applies the same idea to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity against the Arians. Thus according to Luther's reasoning expressed in these passages, a doctrine can be clarified in such a manner, that a previously acceptable position can become heresy.

<sup>291</sup> WA 55, II, 971, 2287-2300: "[2287] 118, 121 **Fēci Iudicium et Iust[iti]am; non trad[as] me Calum[niantibus** [2288] **me.** [2289] Licet non perfecerim, Sum tamen in opere, fēci et facio. Quis enim [2290] perfectus est aut se apprehendisse putat? Igitur Quē fecisti, perficienda [2291] sunt. Vt Ecclesiastes: 'Quid est quod fuit? id quod faciendum.' 'Homo enim [2292] cum Consummauerit, tunc incipiet.' Non enim fecisse satis est et quiescere, [2293] Sed secundum philosophiam Motus est Actus imperfectus, semper partim [2294] acquisitus et partim acquirendus, Semper in medio contrariorum et simul [2295] in termino a quo et ad quem consistens. Quod si in vno fuerit tantum, iam [2296] 4, 363 nec Motus | est. Vita autem presens Est Motus quidam et phase, i. e. transitus [2297] et Gallilea, i. e. Migratio ex hoc mundo ad futuram, que est quies [2298] eterna. Ergo partim illam habemus in conscientia, partim tribulationes in [2299] carne. Et sic inter Mala peccatorum et bona meritorum assidue mouemur [2300] Velut in termino a quo et ad quem. Sed hęc latius alibi tractanda."

WA 57, b111, 2-8: "[1] *Et mutabuntur* [1, 12]. [2] Proprie dicit 'mutabuntur', non autem 'peribunt', sed sicut vestis [3] 'mutabuntur'. Inde enim vocantur vestes mutatorie, ut 4. Regum 5. dedit [4] Naaman puero Helisei vestes mutatorias duplices. Item Zacharie 3.: [5] 'Ecce indui te mutatoriis.' Unde et Christus Math. 24. non dicit: 'Celum [6] et terra peribunt' sed 'transibunt', hoc est, de veteri et presenti forma [7] ad novam et meliorem migrabunt seu mutabuntur ac quodammodo suum [8] phase et ipsa habebunt."

<sup>292</sup> WA 55, I, 468 gloss 7: "GLOSSA: <sup>7)</sup> [1] Quia prophetice loquitur et non historice, Ideo hic non opera [2] creationis vel quę pro Iudeis in Egipto et vet[er]i lege fecit, Sed quę [3] futura erant in Christo intelligi debent. In quo omnia consummata sunt, [4] quę in illis omnibus significata sunt, non autem impleta. Et sic iterum [5] hic distinctio oritur inter opera et opera Dei. Quia opera significatiua sunt [6] creatio totius mundi et omnia figuralia veteris legis, 'facta' autem sunt [7] impletiones eorundem, quod in Christo inceptum est impleri et nunc [8] Impletur et in fine implebitur. Et ideo dixit Dominus: 'Cum exaltatus [9] fuero, omnia traham ad me'. Quia ipse finis omnium et res significata per [10] omnes res. Vnde quia vtrunque Iudei non intellexerunt, dicit supra [11] psal. 27.: 'Non intellexerunt opera Domini et in opera manuum eius'. [12] Et psal. 63. de Apostolis econtra: 'Et facta eius intellexerunt'. Quod est [13] 'opera Domini in opera Domini', nisi quia omnia alia in opera Christi [14] respicere et intendere non intelligunt. Sic psal. 91.: 'Stultus non intelliget', [15] i. e. intellectualiter de eis non sapiet, licet sentiat ea."

The third ones however, together with the Apostle, understand by the Tabernacle at this place the spiritual world, that is, the Holy Church of God. And so the Holy of Holies is the Church Triumphant, the Holy the Church Militant, and the atrium the Synagogue, which is consonant with the five-cubit height of the atrium, because the Synagogue is restricted to the five books of Moses.<sup>293</sup>

Although here Luther considers the first interpretation somewhat forced (probably because it is too concerned with the natural world), he carries over the distinction between the visible and invisible world to the second and third interpretations as well. This is illustrated by the two veils, of which the first means the letter concealing the spirit, and its removal entrance into the Church. The second veil signifies the faith hiding the divinity of Christ (as it is not yet an object of direct perception). Its removal signifies the entering of the invisible world and the heavenly glory: first by Christ and then by us.<sup>294</sup> This process

<sup>293</sup> WA 57, b196, 22 – b197, 24: “[22] Tabernaculum Moysi diverse a diversis est expositum. Alii enim [23] significatum per ipsum volunt universum, ut sit ‘sanctum sanctorum’ [1] ipsa coelestia et invisibilia, ‘Cherubin’ ipsi angelorum chori, unde frequenter [2] in Scripturis dicitur Deo: ‘Qui sedes super Cherubin’, ‘sanctum’ [3] autem significet mundum visibilem, et ‘velum’ ipsum ‘secundum’ sit [4] coelum syderum, ‘septem candelabra’ septem planetae, ‘mensa panum’ [5] 4 elementa etc. Verum haec expositio, sive sit vera sive minus, satis [6] tamen extorta et violenta est. Alii magis tropologice per ‘tabernaculum’ [7] intelligunt minorem mundum id est ipsum hominem, [...] Tertio alii cum Apostolo hoc loco [21] tabernaculum intelligunt mundum quendam spiritualem, quae est Ecclesia [22] sancta Dei. Et ita [sanctum] sanctorum est Ecclesia triumphans, sanctum [23] Ecclesia militans, atrium Synagoga, cui consonat iterum quinarium altitudinis [24] atri, quia quinque libris Moysi literalibus continebatur Synagoga.”

<sup>294</sup> WA 55, I, 240, 3-8: “[26, 5] **Quoniam abscondit me** quia ‘vita nostra abscondita [4] est cum Christo in Deo’ secundum Apostolum **in tabernaculo suo** [5] i. e. humanitate sua vel fide humanitatis eius<sup>6</sup> **in die** tempore **malorum** [6] potestatis malorum: **protexit me in abscondito** fide<sup>7</sup>, que est velamentum [7] secundum in tabernaculo, Sicut litera fuit primum, i. e. Sanctum sanctorum [8] velatur isto ‘abscondito’ **tabernaculi sui**<sup>8</sup> Ecclesie.”

WA 55, II, 335, 75-77: “[75] Bl 80 **Sanctum** spiritualiter Est Ipsa Ecclesia allegorice, Tropologice autem [76] Ipsa sanctitas fidei et Iustitię Spiritualis. Sanctum autem sanctorum est [77] Beatitudo futurę glorię, Sicut in tabernaculo Mosi fuit figuratum.”

WA 57, b202, 8-18: “**Velum** primum, quod [9] erat ante sanctum, significabat absconsionem et fidem futurae Ecclesiae, [10] futuri evangelii et futurorum sacramentorum, non enim Synagoga [11] cernebat haec praesentia. Ideo in passione Christi hoc ipsum fuit ‘scissum [12] a summo usque deorsum’, quia tunc Ecclesia prodiit et Sinagoga desiit. [13] Secundum vero, quod fuit ante [sanctum] sanctorum, hanc nostrae [14] fidei absconsionem significat, in qua Christus homo regnat, quod similiter [15] auferetur, cum apparuerit in gloria. Sic cognoscimus Christum [16] P Bl. 114b (\*)secundum carnem et divinitatem, sed non nisi per fidem, ut 2. Cor. 4.: [17] ‘Nos autem revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes’ (scilicet per fidem) [18] ‘transformamur in eandem imaginem a claritate in claritatem.’”

WA 57, b222, 10-23: “[10] *Habentes itaque, fratres, fiduciam in [11] introitu sanctorum in sanguine Christi etc. [10, 19].* [12] Isto verborum textu paulo obscuriore, imo ornatissimo et fecundissimo, [13] id scilicet vult Apostolus, ut Christum passum et moriendo transeuntem [14] ad gloriam patris imitemur. Sententia quidem brevis et aperta est, [15] nempe ea, quae ad Col. 3. scribitur: ‘Mortui estis cum Christo, et vita [16] vestra abscondita est cum Christo in Deo.’ Sed qua dicendi gratia et vi [17] eam tractet Apostolus, videndum est. Primum velum illud figurale [18] templi signum fuit carnis Christi, ut hic plane ostendit Apostolus. Amotio [19] autem veli per introeuntem, scilicet pontificem, mortem significat carnis [20] Christi, qua ipse a nobis sublatus et in invisibilia sancta ingressus est. [21] Et via illa seu introitus vetusti sacerdotis vetus erat et mortua, significans [22] viam hanc et introitum Christi novum et vivum. Et sic implevit [23] figuram et sustulit umbram.”

AWA 1, 511, 11-14: “Et pulchre in isto versu definitio fidei describitur, quia est *lumen signatum super nos*. Quod ait *signatum*, indicat, quod sit signum et clausum adhuc novissimo velamen, licet sit *lumen* ad primum velamen.”

of entering (*transitus*) has already begun, and is ongoing in the Christians who are passing through the Tabernacle and who in faith and hope (though not manifestly) live in the heavenly glory.<sup>295</sup>

One should also note that the concept of *transitus*, which Luther frequently uses to illustrate this passage, is associated with mystical theology. It is central in Bonaventure's theology, where it is connected both with the concrete passage from this life to the other, as well as with the mystical passage through the different stages of contemplation.<sup>296</sup> Bonaventure also utilizes the parts of the Tabernacle as an image of contemplation which proceeds from the external into the internal, and then to divine things.<sup>297</sup> Once again Luther uses typologies and concepts from the tradition of Victorine and Bonaventurian mysticism in his own cosmological system.

## 2.4. The Human Being

### 2.4.1. Composition

#### 2.4.1.1 The Natural Constituents (Body, Soul, Spirit)

This chapter (2.4) discusses the constitution of the human being in Luther's theological anthropology. The first subchapter (2.4.1) focuses on the general composition of the human being in Luther's theology. Of greatest significance here is the so-called tripartite anthropology (anthropological trichotomy, *triplex homo*: body – soul – spirit) examined in chapter 2.4.1.1 and its relationship to so-called bipartite anthropology (anthropological

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Sometimes Luther also restricts the meaning of the word 'Tabernacle' to the Synagogue, because there the truth was veiled in figures. In contrast the Church is then called "doors", because through the Church the soul enters Heaven. See WA 55, I, 597 gloss 2; WA 55, II, 668, 24-33.

<sup>295</sup> WA 55, II, 629, 2-10: "[2] Psalmus iste de Ecclesia Christi loquitur, ad quam suspirat populus [3] vel potius propheta pro populo et humana natura. Veruntamen, quia Qui [4] in Ecclesia Christi est, iam per spem est in celesti gloria et eterna domo, [5] ideo mixtim secundum vtrunque possunt verba accipi. [[Et secundum [6] Aug[ustinum] totus psalmus debet de eadem materia expo[ni] spiritua]li et [7] non carptim.]] Quod autem de Ecclesia magis militante loquatur, patet, [8] Quia nominat 'tabernacula' et 'atria', que proprio sensu adhuc huius temporis [9] Ecclesiam significant, que est atrium celestis Ierusalem et tabernaculum, [10] in quo per fidem absconditur, et nondum omnia reuelata."

WA 57, b223, 1-14: "Introitus autem coeli per mortem Christi sacramentum [2] est nostrae quoque novae vitae et viae, qua coelestia tantum quaeramus [3] et amemus toto prorsus affectu ingressi in coelestia, ut sit 'conversatio [4] nostra' iuxta Apostolum 'in coelis'. Huius mysticae et exemplaris passionis [5] Christi Paulus ferme per omnes epistolas plenus est, ut ad Rom. 6. [6] et 8., Eph. 4., Col. 3., Philip., et ubicunque docet de mortificando vetere [7] homine et renovando interiore. Igitur quod Christus egit secundum [8] carnem tantum (non enim aliquando transiit a vitiis sicut nos, sed [9] semper fuit et est in coelis, sicut Iohan. 3.: 'Nemo ascendit in coelum [10] nisi filius hominis, qui in coelis est'), per hoc simplo suo concinit duplo [11] nostro. Ut ait Augustinus lib. 3. de trinitate cap. 4.: Nos enim carne et [12] spiritu transimus, Christus autem carne solum transiit. Ideo transitus [13] carnis nostrae exemplum est (quia similes ei erimus), transitu autem [14] carnis Christi significatur tamen velut sacramento transitus spiritus."

<sup>296</sup> See *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* VII, 1-6. See also Hülbusch 1974; Menard 1974; Menard 2000. On Luther's use of the concept, see also Brecht 2004, 286-287.

<sup>297</sup> *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* III, 1; V, 1.

dichotomy, *duplex homo*: flesh – spirit). The role of the spirit as the determining part of the person and the link between the two anthropological structures is examined in chapter 2.4.1.2. Chapter 2.4.1.3 discusses the bipartite anthropology as qualitative distinction. The second subchapter (2.4.2) will investigate how the framework formed by these two anthropologies operates in Luther’s understanding of the Christian. It will focus on the following three topics: the transformation of the person from carnal to spiritual through the infusion of faith (chapter 2.4.2.1); the conflict between the spirit and the flesh in the Christian (chapter 2.4.2.2); and the interpenetrating relationship of the spirit and the flesh as the two natures of the Christian person in the context of Luther’s doctrine of *simul iustus et peccator* (chapter 2.4.2.3).

Luther’s theological anthropology revolves around certain central concepts, which can be separated into two different ways of dividing the human being into his or her constituents. These divisions overlap to some extent, both in terminology and content. The first way of dividing the human being is the **natural** division, which concerns the natural parts or constituents of the human being and reaches its mature form as the **tripartite division** between body (*corpus/caro*), soul (*anima*) and spirit (*spiritus*). It is illustrated frequently by Luther by the means of the image of the human being as a tripartite tabernacle.<sup>298</sup> Luther often refers to these parts also using the classical anthropological terms of: carnal man (*homo carnalis*), animal man or man with soul (*homo animalis*), and spiritual man (*homo spiritualis*). Second, there is the **bipartite division** between flesh (*caro*) and spirit (*spiritus*), or the old man (*homo vetus*) and the new (*homo novus*), a way of dividing the human being which concerns the **quality** of the person.<sup>299</sup> Central for this division are the two affects, flesh and spirit. Both affects (flesh and spirit), however, may exist within the same Christian **person** (*persona*). The term person can encompass the both previous structures (human being’s natural composition and affects). The tripartite and bipartite divisions are, moreover, related to each other, although they exist on different ‘levels’. Navigating Luther’s anthropology requires emphasizing terminological clarity. Therefore the present discussion adheres to a high degree to Luther’s use of anthropological terms, though from a modern perspective terms referring to a human being as “man” may sound problematic. However, one should note, that these terms usually refer to some part or aspect of the person, not to the person as a whole.

Historically there are two trends in Luther studies relating to these divisions. First, there are two schools of thought in the previous studies on the question of the relationship between the two anthropologies. Some studies (i.a. Hägglund and Joest) tend to fuse them with each other so that only the bipartite anthropology remains. The studies of Lauri Haikola, Herbert Olsson and Eero Huovinen (which follow the pre-Mannermaa Finnish-Swedish research) keep the anthropologies separate. The present study will argue, that these studies are largely correct, and will follow their argumentation in the discussion below. Second, especially the German studies on Luther’s theological anthropology

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<sup>298</sup> Some authors also call this the *philosophical* division, as it concerns the objective parts of the human being and is connected with the anthropological distinctions in natural philosophy.

<sup>299</sup> This division is often called also the *theological* division as it is more apparently connected with the relationship of the person to God than the former one. To call only one of the anthropological divisions theological is, however, problematic because the spirit is also connected to God in the tripartite division (see chapter 2.4.1.2).

understand the terms “flesh” and “spirit” more or less relationally: as conditions in which the human being turns towards God (in which case he is “spirit”) or away from God (in which case he is “flesh”). The aspect of turning exists in Luther’s thought, so the idea is in itself correct. However, it is not just the relation of the person that constitutes these two. The present study argues that the terms flesh and spirit also have an ontological connection to their objects. The flesh is connected to corporeality even when understood as a theological concept and within the bipartite qualitative anthropology. Likewise, the human being can be properly called “spirit” or “spiritual” only because of an ontological participation (through faith) in God who is spirit, and who in faith dwells in the human spirit. Without this participation the human being cannot “turn” relationally towards God. The relational aspect presupposes the ontological aspect as its condition.<sup>300</sup> The following discussion of Luther’s ways of dividing the human is comprised of three sections. First will be an analysis of the texts discussing the natural division. Following this will be a discussion of how the spirit functions as the determining part of the person, and of its function as the nexus between the two divisions. The final section will analyse the nature of the qualitative division between the spirit and the flesh. Both divisions, as well as the singular terms, appear frequently in Luther’s texts between 1513-1521, although some development also takes place during this period. The following discussion will examine the texts first in chronological order (except when there seems to be no temporal development), and then by means of forming a systematized synthesis of Luther’s thought.

In the *Dictata* (1513-15) the most fundamental distinction for Luther’s anthropology is that between the flesh and the spirit. For Luther the spirit (*spiritus*), often identical with the mind (*mens*), is the highest and most noble part of the human being. It is that part which is (or at least should be) directed towards invisible, eternal and divine things. Its opposite is the flesh (*caro*), which means the body, the sensual capacity and love directed by these two.<sup>301</sup> Thus in the *Dictata* the spirit and the flesh are closely connected with the

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<sup>300</sup> One of the major weaknesses of many previous studies on Luther’s anthropology lies in the relation of these two anthropologies. Bengt Häggglund’s comprehensive work (in Swedish) *De homine: Människouppfatningen i äldre luthersk tradition* is plagued by its disregard of the tripartite anthropology (see Häggglund 1959, 58-67; 321-327). This leads to confusion, as terms used in different senses are mixed together. Joest’s famous volume *Ontologie der Person bei Luther* suffers from the same problem. Whereas Häggglund fuses together the soul and the spirit, Joest attempts to present the soul as intermediate part of the human being. For Joest, the soul is the person proper, which then is called spirit or flesh based on the person’s relationality: i.e., the nature of the life of the person and the objects towards which he turns (see Joest 1967, 163-202). A more adequate grasp of Luther’s anthropology is offered by Haikola, Olsson and Huovinen, who correctly distinguish between what Haikola and Huovinen call philosophical and theological anthropology. The former concerns the nature of the human being, the latter the qualities. Haikola and Olsson, however, make the mistake of positing the existence of the spirit in the carnal person as well, which leads to some problems in their interpretation. See Haikola 1958, 24-31; Olsson 1971, 454-462; Huovinen 1981, 42-44. It is also to be noted with regret that Olsson’s posthumously published study lacks footnotes in the fifth chapter, which is focused on anthropology. The discussion in this chapter of the person study largely omits Gerhard Ebeling’s important work *Lutherstudien II: Disputatio de Homine* (Ebeling 1982; Ebeling 1989). This study discusses Luther’s anthropology primarily as it appears in the late *Disputatio de homine* (1536), which falls outside the period of my research.

<sup>301</sup> See e.g. WA 55, I, 276 gloss 6; WA 55, II, 67, 11-15; 804, 138-139. The place of the soul is discussed later in this chapter. Another important term for Luther is the heart (*cor*), which is usually essentially synonymous with the spirit, but refers to the affective capacities instead of the cognitive (e.g. WA 55, I, 96 gloss 2; WA 55, II, 66, 15 – 67, 1; 96, 17-22; 216, 42-47; 297, 24-29; 894, 101 – 895, 114). As this study focuses on the cognitive capacities of the human being, this term will not be examined in detail here. There



distinction of the two worlds (the invisible and the visible) and with the way the Scriptures are interpreted (carnally/literally vs. spiritually).<sup>302</sup> The basic distinction between these two realities, these two ways of interpreting the Scripture and these two anthropological concepts is so strong and pervasive that one could say it forms the central structuring principle of the *Dictata*. Therefore in the *Dictata* it is sometimes difficult to distinguish categorically between the natural division of the human being and the qualitative division (where the terms refer to the whole man and not his parts). Nevertheless in this chapter it will be argued that these two divisions can be distinguished even in the *Dictata*.

As noted in the previous chapter, Luther frequently uses the image of the Old Testament Tabernacle or Tent of Meeting as an image of the human being. This image already appears in the *Dictata*, where Luther calls human being a tent or a tabernacle. As a tent was made from leather, Luther says, so also a human being is made of the body covered with skin, and orifices (eyes, ears, mouth etc.) through which sense information can enter.<sup>303</sup> However, Luther draws a significant distinction between the idea of a human being *as* a tabernacle, and that of his being *in* a tabernacle. For Luther, a carnal person without a spirit is wholly flesh, and thus he *is* a tabernacle. A person with a spirit, however, dwells inside his tabernacle: He *has* a tabernacle (i.e., a body) but he is distinct from and not identical with the body.<sup>304</sup> In addition, for Luther a spiritual person is not just any tent or tabernacle, but a Sanctuary of God, within which God dwells with the spirit.<sup>305</sup> Thus already here Luther establishes the innermost part of the human being as the dwelling place of God.

Already in the earliest parts of the *Dictata* one can also notice other central anthropological distinctions alongside the flesh – spirit terminology. One of these is the distinction between the external and internal man (*exterior* vs. *interior homo*).<sup>306</sup> According to Luther the frontside, or face, of the person is his spirit, or mind, his backside is the body, or the senses. On the one hand, the terms “internal man” and “external man” refer to these, and in this case they stand for the natural parts of the human being. The face (i.e., the internal man) should be turned towards God, and the senses (i.e., the external

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are, however, some instances in which Luther uses *cor* (in this instances opposed to *renes*) to denote the intellectual capacities (WA 55, I, 230, 12-13; WA 55, II, 97, 6-10; AWA 2, 420, 5 – 421, 16).

<sup>302</sup> As an example of this see WA 55, II, 802, 78 – 803, 105.

<sup>303</sup> WA 55, II, 327, 473-478: “[473] Sed vide, quam apte Corpus nostrum ‘tabernaculum’ dicatur, [474] teu[tonice **lauberhütten**, **Buden**, Scena etc. Quia sicut tabernaculum ex ramis [475] construitur et preter portam et fenestras vndique est peruium et perlustrabile, [476] Ita corpus nostrum sensibus et lingua (que est maxima porta) et [477] BI 78 ipso tactu, \*qui per totum corpus est foraminosus sicut tabernaculum, totum [478] est patulum, et varia percipit per ista foramina. Sed et cibi et potus [479, 480] per os ingeruntur, et ingreditur et egreditur omne per os, malum et bonum.”

The senses as the vestibule of the soul are also mentioned in WA 55, I, 516 gloss 8, 1-3. The image of leather tent is connected to the idea that grace divides the flesh (i.e., the external man) from the skin, killing the animal (i.e., the old man), and fills the skins separated from the flesh with grace (i.e., the internal man turned towards God), see WA 55, II, 189, 139 – 190, 150; 802, 78 – 803, 105.

<sup>304</sup> WA 55, II, 326, 466 – 327, 472: “[466] Conuallis itaque tabernaculorum primum Iudeus et Græcus, ac inde [467] omnis, qui solum est homo. Quia Tentoria Ethiopie vidit Abacuk. Quando [468] enim homo sine spiritu est, caro est Et sic non in tabernaculo corporis sui, [469] Sed est ipsum tabernaculum. Sara enim olim intus in tabernaculo erat, [470] Genes. Et Iacob vir simplex habitans in tabernaculis. Hi sunt qui intus secum [471] habitant et non foris erumpunt et vagantur Sicut Esau, Qui in rebus [472] herent exterioribus et vagantur cum tabernaculis suis sicut aucupes et pastores.”

<sup>305</sup> WA 55, I, 520, 4-8; 520 gloss 18; WA 55, II, 371, 429-433; 452, 102 – 453, 129.

<sup>306</sup> On this distinction see also Olsson 1971, 472-475.

man) towards the visible world.<sup>307</sup> On the other hand, however, the terms “external man” and “internal man” often refer in Luther’s thought to the orientation of the person. If a person turns his face (i.e., spirit, internal man) towards the creatures, he at the same time turns his back to God. In this way the internal man (i.e., spirit) is deserted (*desertum*) and, in a way, migrated (*migrat*) and changes into the external man, so that the person becomes wholly a carnal and external man. Luther can therefore say that a person totally turned towards and submerged in external things loses his internal man.<sup>308</sup> This statement of Luther’s already shows how the ontological and relational aspects come together in his anthropology.<sup>309</sup>

Thus in the *Dictata* one can already notice, how Luther distinguishes between the human beings natural parts and the qualitative constituents, or between the composition of the person and the orientation of the person. Luther also calls the internal man the “new man” and “spiritual man” (*novus homo, homo spiritualis*), and the external man the “old man” and “carnal man” (*vetus homo, homo carnalis*). The old, external and carnal man is the man of sin; the new, internal and spiritual man is the man of grace.<sup>310</sup> The existence of the internal man is not dependent, therefore, on the natural qualities of the person. The spiritual man is not derived from the flesh, but is received from Christ in faith as

<sup>307</sup> WA 55, I, 244 gloss 11, 21-24: “GLOSSA:<sup>11</sup> [21]Mens nostra Est ‘facies’ nostra, Sensus autem est dorsum nostrum. [22]Quia per sensum vertimur ad creaturas, per mentem ad Deum. Si autem [23]mentem etiam ad creaturas vertimus, tunc auertimus ‘faciem’ a Deo [24]et dorsum ei vertimus.”

WA 55, I, 830: “**Supra<sup>4</sup> dorsum meum** exteriorem hominem, secundum quem presens viuo inter eos<sup>5</sup> **fabricauerunt peccatores** Iudei”

WA 55, I, 831 gloss 5: “GLOSSA:<sup>5</sup> Non secundum ‘interiorem hominem’, qui est facies mea versa ad Deum et futura.”

WA 55, II, 225, 28-32: “Sed quare dicit **vultus mei**? Quia tota merces Est [29] visio, Et quoniam Deus non est ‘salutaris’ nisi iis, qui faciem ad eum vertunt [30] et dorsum ad temporalia. Qui autem in temporalibus querunt salutem, [31] volunt Deum sibi facere salutare dorsi sui, Quia faciem ad temporalia [32] et dorsum ad Deum vertunt, cum ‘duobus dominis seruire non possit’.”

WA 55, II, 364, 229-231: “Notandum itaque, Quod Corpus nostrum est [230] ‘dorsum’, quod ad mundum et temporalia vertimus, Spiritus autem est ‘facies’, [231] que sursum ad Deum tendit et festinat semper.”

WA 55, II, 583, 1438-1443: “[1438] ‘Percussit’ igitur eos ‘in posteriora’ Dominus, Quando in temporalibus [1439] eos afflixit et fecit sperare in illis, que tamen velut stercora reputanda docet [1440] Apostolus. Sane ‘posteriora’ in spiritu sunt ipsum corpus Sicut anteriora [1441] ipse animę. Vnde ad Moysen: ‘posteriora mea videbis’. Secundo sunt [1442] ipsa temporalia, ad que versatur posterius nostrum, scil. corpus, et anteriora [1443] sunt ipsa ęterna, ad que versatur antierius nostrum, scil. Spiritus.”

See also WA 55, II, 152, 23 – 153, 5; 452, 102 – 453, 156; 930, 1139-1149.

<sup>308</sup>WA 55, I, 467 gloss 17: “GLOSSA:<sup>17</sup> ‘Homo enim exterior’ est desertum in sanctis. Et ‘speciosum’ in illo Est anima latens in tali homine. Sicut econtra ‘homo exterior’ in hominibus mundi est valde cultus [et speciosus], Sed ‘interior’ est ‘desertum’, quia illum non colunt sicut illi.”

WA 55, I, 888: “**Et erue me de manu** potestate **filiorum Iudeorum alienorum** non spiritualium Sed carnalium<sup>19</sup> / **quorum os locutum est** docuit et iactat **vanitatem** i. e. de vanis et transitoriis : **et dextera eorum dextera iniquitatis** vt supra, i. e. eorum ‘interior homo’ totus est factus exterior et sapit externa tantum, quod est iniquum.”

WA 55, II, 803, 89-90: “Carni [90] autem adherere Est hominem interiorem in veterem et exteriorem nimis [91] migrasse, sicut plorat psalmus idem.”

<sup>309</sup> Cf. Schwarz 1962, 118-122, for whom the term signifies only the actual orientation.

<sup>310</sup> WA 55, II, 187, 62-66: “[63] 32, 3 B1 43 **Canticum nouum** non potest cantare nisi homo nouus. Est autem [64] homo nouus homo gratię, homo spiritualis et interior coram Deo. Homo [65] autem vetus Est ‘homo peccati’, homo carnalis et exterior coram mundo. [66] Nouitas enim gratia est, vetustas peccatum.”

See also WA 55, II, 452, 102 – 453, 156; 873, 5-9 on a person being turned and drawn away from the world towards spiritual things and God.

participation in the spiritual reality.<sup>311</sup> Thus even though the internal man signifies the spirit as a part of the person, to have a proper internal man and a spirit is only possible through the work of grace dwelling in a person. This understanding is analogous to Luther's distinction between being a tabernacle and having a tabernacle. While the carnal and properly external person simply *is* flesh (or the spirit is so deserted that it can be discounted), a person who lives an internal and spiritual life can be said to have a spirit in the proper sense. He cannot be wholly reduced to either spirit or flesh, but rather he has both an external man and an internal man: flesh and spirit. Therefore, the spiritual person is in fuller sense a proper composite of flesh and spirit than the carnal person, who has an "empty" or "deserted" spirit, which the grace of God has vacated.<sup>312</sup>

From the above we can see how the flesh – spirit distinction plays a very significant role in the *Dictata*. The role of the tripartite division (flesh, soul and spirit) in the *Dictata*, however, remains more vague and not fully developed. This pertains especially to the nature and place of the soul (*anima*) in the human person. In the *Dictata*, Luther often uses this term in a positive sense, interchangeable with mind, spirit and internal man.<sup>313</sup> But in other places the term is used in a more negative sense of the sensual or corporeal part of the human being and the force animating it. Even in the same section Luther is capable of using the term in both senses. He can first distinguish between the "eye" (*oculus*) as the spirit or intellect, and "soul" (*anima*) as the sensuality (and "stomach" (*venter*) as the memory), following Augustine and Cassiodorus. He can then immediately follow such a statement with a different division distinguishing the "eye" (*oculus*), the higher part of the soul, from the "soul" (*anima*), the lower part of the soul and the "stomach" (*venter*), the vegetable and sensitive flesh.<sup>314</sup> This labile nature of the soul may be explained by its being the intermediate part between the spiritual and the sensual, such that it can be turned towards either one. However, Luther already in the *Dictata* also connects the soul and reason to each other. The human being is *homo rationalis* on account of his soul. Echoing the distinctions of his later works, Luther commenting on Psalm 48 divides the fallen human being into a corporal and a rational nature. He insists that through sin the rational, and not only corporeal, nature has become desperate, forgetful and oblivious to celestial

<sup>311</sup> WA I, 684 gloss 5; 886, 21-27; 886 glosses 13-15.

<sup>312</sup> One should note here how for Luther the spirit plays the role of a principle in which divinity and humanity are connected. This idea seems comparable to Luther's statement in the Genesis lectures that in the state before the Fall the human being had the image of God in his own substance (*in sua substantia habuerit*), through which he participated in the life of God. The spirit therefore does seem to be for Luther something, which in one sense is a part of the human being, but in another sense is not, because it is participation in the divine. This duality also explains, why from one perspective the fallen person cannot have a spirit in the proper sense, but in another sense has the spirit as a kind of dead and empty possibility. See WA 42, 47, 8-17. See also Huovinen 1984, 133-135.

<sup>313</sup> E.g. WA 55, I, 230, 12-13; 520 gloss 18; WA 55, II, 310, 16-19; 346, 79-80; 371, 431-433; 452, 103-118.

<sup>314</sup> WA 55, I, 278, 2-4: "**oculus meus** intellectus vel [3] spiritus: **anima mea** et per eam tota sensualitas et **venter meus**"<sup>11</sup> memoria [4] mea secundum August[inum] et Cassi[odorum]."

WA 55, I, 278 gloss 11, 12-17: "GLOSSA:<sup>11</sup> [12]Psal. 6.: 'Turbatus est a furore oculus meus.' Quia non solum ira, [13]Sed omnis passio excecatur oculum mentis in malis et turbat saltem in [14]bonis. Oculo autem mentis turbato etiam anima fit tediosa et totum [15]corpus, quod ipsa viuificat et sensificat. Vnde hic 'Oculus' pro superiore [16]parte anime, 'Anima' autem pro inferiore, 'Venter' pro ipsa carne vegetabili [17]et sensitua."

WA 55, II, 170, 17-18: "[17] 'Et anima mea turbata est valde. Sed tu, Domine, vsquequo?' [18] Anima est, prout viuificat corpus. Et sic conturbato oculo fidei tota [19] sensualitas etiam turbatur et omnes sensus."

things.<sup>315</sup> Used in this sense, the soul and reason have limited capacities for understanding the superior spiritual things, which are concealed from them. These statements in the *Dictata* already contain the seeds of the division of human nature into three parts, a summary of which can be observed in the following passage:

For the spirit is the superior, the flesh the inferior part of the human being in this life. And therefore exactly the rational man or the man according to his soul is the “firmament between the waters”, i.e., between the wisdom of the flesh and of the spirit. But if he turns himself to the wisdom of the spirit, then his superior parts are covered with waters, because [God did not cover the inferior parts, but the superior, with water].<sup>316</sup>

The same line of thought seems to have been more fully developed in the *Lectures on Romans* (1515-16), where the same distinctions between the external and internal, carnal and spiritual man persist. The carnal man is the man of sin, without spirit. In the New Creation through the work of grace, the person becomes an internal man or, more precisely, acquires an internal man. The struggle between the two begins and persists, because in this life the internal man cannot be without the external.<sup>317</sup> The *Lectures on Romans* strongly emphasizes the simultaneous existence of the two.<sup>318</sup> In addition, the nature of the soul as the intermediate part between the two is expressed there even more clearly:

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<sup>315</sup> WA 55, II, 257, 4-12: “[4] Primum est ‘Adam’. Et hoc proprie exprimit hominis naturam corporalem [5] et hominem exteriorem, secundum quam ‘de limo terre’ formatus est. [6] ‘Adam’ enim terram proprie significat, maxime rubram. Et sic aptissime [7] Apost[olus] Ro. 5. dicit, Quod Adam fuerit ‘forma futuri’, Quia terrenus et [8] corporalis homo figura est celestis i. e. spiritualis. Vnde dicit ‘Si portauimus [9] Imaginem terreni’ etc. Alterum Est ‘Enos’, Quod interpretatur [10] ‘obliuiscens’ seu ‘desperatus.’ Et proprie exprimit hominis rationalem naturam, [11] secundum quam corpori peccati immersus est et desperatus ac obliuiscus [12] factus.”

See also WA 55, I, 520 gloss 18.

<sup>316</sup> WA 55, II, 804, 138-143: “[138] Spiritus enim Est Superius, Caro autem inferius hominis [139] in hac vita. Et sic homo prout rationalis vel secundum animam est [140] ‘firmamentum inter aquas et aquas’ i. e. inter sapientiam carnis et [141] spiritus. Si autem sese vertit ad sapientiam spiritus, iam superiora eius [142] teguntur aquis, quia [[non] inferiora, sed su[peri]ora eius tegit [143] [a]quis].”

Joest 1967, 167-169 interprets the quotation as referring to two ways of life (*Lebensbestimmung*) and rejecting the idea that it speaks about the constituent parts of the person. According to Joest, the human being proper is only the “soul,” and the “spirit” and “flesh” signify the two ways of life he can turn to. The waters, according to Joest, signify the Gospel towards which the spiritual person then turns. He sees the waters, but not the future things beyond them, whereas the carnal person turns toward the Earth. However, according to Luther, the rational person or soul is not *below* the waters, but *the firmament between* the waters, i.e. the intermediate part, and can turn towards both. The soul has the capacity to become spiritual through the Gospel, and gaze into the heavenly glory hidden by the superior clouds. It can also become completely carnal, when the internal man, i.e. spirit, is completely submerged unto the external man as the water sinks into the Earth (see the complete text in context, WA 55, II, 802, 74 – 804, 143).

<sup>317</sup> WA 56, 8, 1-2; 8 gloss 1; 65 gloss 2; 66, 4 – 65, 2; 75, 9-15; 75 gloss 2; 117 gloss 6; 123 gloss 3, 11-14; 324, 5-15; 340, 30 – 341, 8; 345, 29 – 346, 1; 461, 3-9. At certain points Luther states, however, that the old man did not exist before the Law. However, he proceeds to clarify that by this he means the old man was not known or recognized (WA 56, 64 gloss 3; 65 gloss 2).

<sup>318</sup> See chapter 2.4.2.3.

Therefore I have said: There are three [parts] in man: Body, soul, spirit. Soul is in the middle of both. The body is placed under subservience, but with the consent of the soul and commanding of the spirit, which is free above everything.<sup>319</sup>

In the thirteenth chapter of the *Lectures on Romans* Luther also gives an illustrative summary of his anthropology, which is strongly reminiscent of his ideas in *On the Freedom of a Christian* (1520)<sup>320</sup>:

Is there a mystery behind why he does not say “every man” but rather, “every soul”? Perhaps because of a sincere submission that must be from the heart. Second, because the soul is the medium between the body and the spirit; so that he thus may show that the believer is at the same time exalted once and for all above all things and yet subject to them, and so he is a twin who has two forms in him, just like Christ. For according to the spirit he is above all things. [...]

Thus the spirit of the believers cannot be or become subject to anyone, but is exalted with Christ in God, having all things under its feet. This is illustrated by the woman of Rev. 12, who is depicted as having the moon, i.e., all temporal powers under her feet. The “soul”, which is the same spirit of man, insofar it lives and works, is occupied by the senses and temporal things and should be “subject to all, also human creatures because of God”. Through this submission it is obedient to God and wills the same with God; and through this submission it overcomes these things.<sup>321</sup>

It is noteworthy that the nature of the soul is here also defined as being “the same spirit of man” ( “*Anima*’, *Que est idem spiritus hominis*”). Ontologically the soul and spirit are the same, but the word “soul” acquires its meaning from its acts, effects and objects: to live and to be occupied with the senses and temporal things.<sup>322</sup> In addition, the text stands otherwise in continuity with the previously analysed texts, except that it emphasizes the similarity of the twofold composition of the believer to the two natures of Christ, which is a central idea in the *Lectures on Romans*.

<sup>319</sup> WA 56, 480, 18-20: “[18] Vt Ergo dixi: Tria sunt in homine, Corpus, Anima, spiritus; Anima [19] medium vtriusque. Corpus subiectum est potestati, Sed consentiente et [20] volente anima ac iubente spiritu, qui est Liber super omnia.”

<sup>320</sup> See WA 7, 21, 1-17.

<sup>321</sup> WA 56, 476, 3-26: “[3] An Mysterium habeat, Quod non dicit: Omnis homo, Sed ‘omnis [4] Anima’? Forte propter Synceram subiectionem et ex animo prestandam. [5] Secundo, Quia Anima est medium inter corpus et Spiritum; Vt ergo [6] ostendat, Quod fidelis simul et semel est exaltatus super omnia et tamen [7] subiectus, Et sic Gemellus duas in se formas habens, sicut et Christus. [8] Nam secundum spiritum est super omnia. [...]

[20] Igitur Spiritus fidelium Nulli est aut esse potest subiectus, Sed est [21] cum Christo in Deo Exaltatus, omnia hæc sub pedibus suis habens, Vt [22] Apoc. 12. In Muliere figuratur habente sub pedibus Lunam i. e. temporalia. [23] ‘Anima’, Que est idem spiritus hominis, Sed inquantum vivit [24] et operatur, in sensibus ac temporalibus occupatur, debet esse ‘subiecta [25] omni etiam Creature humanæ propter Deum’. Qua subiectione Deo [26] obedit et idem cum Deo vult; ideo iam per eam subiectionem superat illa.”

<sup>322</sup> In this sense some credit can be given to Joest’s relational interpretation (Joest 1967, 170-172), but the relational aspect of the soul does not exclude its real participation in its objects. Joest also fails to pay sufficient attention to the difference between the tripartite and bipartite anthropologies when he attempts to convert the former into the latter. Here Joest takes the “soul” to mean the whole person, and the “flesh” and the “spirit” to mean the two areas of life, though this interpretation contradicts the latter text of Luther’s *Magnificat*, with which Joest is familiar. (See p. 109 and the following discussion).

In the *Lectures on Galatians* (1516/17) Luther further discusses the nature of the soul. The lectures contain quite a lot of deliberations regarding the relationship of the various anthropological terms used by the Apostle Paul to each other. Luther also illustrates his anthropology in these lectures by means of several allegorical images:

Some who ponder Paul with great attention say that they see a threefold man in him, that is: animal, carnal, spiritual. The distinction is very good, but the Apostle Paul seems to call the animal and the carnal man by confusing names: the old, external, earthly etc. as in 1. Cor 2: 'The animal man [or man with a soul (*homo animalis*)] does not perceive those things which are God's', But against that 1. Cor 15: 'The animal body is sown and the spiritual will rise.' And again later in chapter 5: 'The works of the flesh are' etc., with carnal as 'in evil'. But contrary to this in 1. Cor. 3 he calls them carnal, when they were faithful. Therefore 'animal man' is the sensual man himself, bound to the senses because he is driven by the five of them like a beast. 'Carnal', however, is the rational man, or the man according to his soul. Also in the Scriptures a dual vocabulary is used: First, man is called 'Adam', i.e., earth, on account of the body and animality, second on account of the soul *aenos*, i.e., miserable or weakened, as in Ps. 8: 'Who is *aenos*, what is his memory, or the son of Adam, that you visit him.' The spiritual man himself is hidden to us, the new and internal image and glory of God, called 'man' [*(vir)*] by the Apostle. He is the one who is empty alone for God, rather in a passive than in an active sense, because he does nothing else except receive God in himself. He is the one whose life is in faith, hope and love; namely, wholly dependent on the invisible.

According to blessed Augustine in *De Trinitate* 12, these three men are represented in Paradise by means of the serpent, Eve and Adam. There he says that Adam is the spiritual man, Eve the carnal man and serpent the animal man, rejecting those who have interpreted Eve as sensuality or animality. Accordingly, theologians call the superior part of reason spiritual, the carnal part of reason inferior, and the sensuality animal. They are also represented by the Tabernacle of Moses. The atrium, which was five cubits high and illuminated by the corporeal sun, signifies the sensual or animal part, possessing namely the five senses and visible light; the Holy, however, which was not illuminated by Sun but by the candelabrum, signifies the carnal or rational, or the rational part illuminated by other lights, namely the sciences and arts; the Holy of Holies, however, which was wholly in darkness and without light and where the Ark and mercy seat were, signifies the spiritual man who possesses God in interior darkness, i.e., in faith.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>323</sup> WA 57, a77, 25 – a79, 2: "Quidam [26] sane intentissime Paulum trutinantes triplicem hominem videri in ipso [27] dicunt, sc. animale, carnale, spirituale. Distinctio optime placet, [1] sed videtur apostolus Paulus carnalem et animale confunde nominare, nunc [2] veterem, exteriorem, terrenum etc., ut 1. Corinthios 2.: 'Animalis homo [3] non percipit ea, que Dei sunt.' Sed contra 1. Corin. 15.: 'Seminatur corpus [4] animale, et resurget spirituale.' Item infra 5.: 'Carnis opera sunt' etc., [5] ubi 'carnalis' in malum. Sed contra 1. Corin. 3. vocat eos 'carnales', cum [6] essent fideles. Igitur 'animalis homo' est ipse sensualis homo, tanquam [7] addictus, quia sicut bestia 5 sensibus agit. 'Carnalis' autem est homo [8] rationalis seu secundum animam. Nam et in Scripturis duplici vocabulo, [9] uno propter corpus et animalitatem, quod est 'Adam' i. e. terra, vocatur, [10] alio propter animam, quod est *αἰνός* i. e. miser seu afflicto, ut psal. 8.: [11] 'Quid est *αἰνός*, quod memor es eius, aut filius Adam, quia visitas eum.' [12] Spiritus homo est ipse absconditus nobis, novus et interior, imago et [13] gloria Dei et vir apud Apostolum vocatus. Hic est, qui soli proprie Deo [14] vacat potiusque passivus quam activus, cum nihil aliud faciat, quam [15] quod Deum in se recipiat; cuius vita est in fide, spe et charitate, totus sc. [16] pendens ex invisibilibus. Hos tres homines beatus Augustinus 12. de [17] trinitate dicit figuratos in paradiso per serpentem, per Evam, per

Luther's exposition of the meaning of the soul (*anima*) and animal man (*homo animalis*) here follows the ideas expressed in the *Dictata*'s exposition of Ps. 48.<sup>324</sup> Animality is connected with the body and the senses: the "animal man" refers to the sensual and corporeal nature of the human being. However, further developing the idea expressed in the *Dictata* of the fallen status of human rationality, Luther states that the *carnal* man does not mean the corporeal man, but the rational man or man according to his soul. Therefore carnality is not principally connected to the body, but to the fallen reason, which is oriented towards the arts and sciences but forgetful of God. Note how here Luther uses the term "soul" no longer for the spiritual man (as in the *Dictata*), but in connection with the faculties directed towards created things. Nevertheless, the distinction Luther draws here between the superior and inferior parts of reason (borrowed from Augustine)<sup>325</sup> is in harmony with the idea that the soul and the spirit are still ontologically parts of the same whole, but directed towards different objects. Furthermore, the spiritual man is here defined as the hidden, internal image of God, and as the capacity to receive God and depend on the invisible (*Hic est, qui soli proprie Deo vacat potiusque passivus quam activus, cum nihil aliud faciat, quam quod Deum in se recipiat*). This act of reception happens in the interior darkness of faith, as is prefigured by the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle in which God was present.<sup>326</sup> Luther emphasizes the themes of passivity, emptiness and darkness, as well as turning to interior things, which is comparable to the *Dictata*'s themes of turning away from created and visible things towards the interior of the Tent. In addition, the idea of receiving the image and glory is connected with the idea that Christ is the substantial image and reflection of God which shines on the rational soul (i.e., on its superior part), which alone is *capax dei*, capable of receiving this divine image and reflection. Behind this idea lies a Christological application of the metaphysics of light.<sup>327</sup>

A very similar picture can be had from the *Lectures on Hebrews* (1517), in which appear two passages containing a lengthy treatment of anthropology. The first passage closely resembles the formerly treated text of the *Lectures on Romans*. This text has already been discussed in part at the end of chapter 2.3.3.3. In it Luther discusses the symbolic meanings of the Tabernacle. There he gives the Tabernacle a cosmological, an

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Adam, [18] ut sit Adam spiritualis, Eva carnalis, serpens animalis, reprobans ibidem [19] eos, qui Evam sunt interpretati sensualem seu animale. Hinc theologi [20] vocant spiritualem superiorem porcionem rationis, inferiorem carnalem [21] porcionem rationis, animale autem sensualitatem. Item figurati etiam [22] sunt per tabernaculum Moisi. Atrium enim, quod erat 5 cubitorum [23] altitudinis et corporali sole illustre, sensualem seu animale significat 5 [24] sc. sensibus et visibili luce potientem; sanctum autem non sole, sed candelabro [25] illuminatum significat carnalem seu rationalem seu rationalem aliis luminibus, sc. [26] scientiis et artibus illuminatum; sanctum sanctorum autem prorsus in [1] tenebris et sine lumine, ubi arca et propiciatorium, spirituale hominem [2] significat, in tenebris interioribus i. e. in fide habentem Deum."

<sup>324</sup> See WA 55, II, 257, 4-12, text at footnote 315.

<sup>325</sup> De Trin. XII, 17. On the concept in Augustine see Nash 2003, 7-8; 64-66. Luther uses the same distinction with reference to Augustine also in the glosses to Tauler's sermons (WA 9, 97, 1-5). On the Scholastic background and Luther's early use of the distinction see Ebeling 1982, 227-240; Mulligan 1955.

<sup>326</sup> Here there is an analogy to Gerson's definition of mind: "Mens ab eminentia nominatur et in supremo cordis triclinio collocatur, quia proprium habet officium spiritualibus intendere. Non qualibuscunque, quia ratio communiter circa sui cognitionem et spiritualium occupatur. Sed mens vacat soli Deo." See *Tractatus septimus super magnificat*, De mente veritates duodecim (DP IV, 332D-333A). See also Metzger 1964, 76 footnote 36.

<sup>327</sup> See chapters 2.2.3 and 3.3.

anthropological and an ecclesiological meaning. Luther explicates the anthropological meaning of the Tabernacle:

Others rather wish to understand the Tabernacle tropologically as the minor world, that is, the human being, who according to the highest part of his reason moves among the invisible and divine things. So only God alone, as Augustine declares in numerous places, dwells in and fills man's higher mind, and it is exactly through this that the human being is the Ark of the Lord which has the mercy seat, the Cherubim, manna and the rod of Aaron. But the Holy signifies the lower reason, which is illuminated by the light, as is said, of the natural reason. This is signified by the candelabrum. Finally, the forecourt means the carnal sensibility, as a figure of which it is five cubits high, because there are five senses. In short, accordingly, the senses are the forecourt, the reason is the Holy and the intellect is the Holy of Holies, which are the three men frequently mentioned by Paul: the animal, the carnal and the spiritual. And each one of these has its own rite, its own theology and its own worship of God, to which the following three types of theology correspond: symbolic, to the senses; proper, to the reason; and mystical, to the intellect.<sup>328</sup>

As can be seen, the above text closely follows the distinctions drawn in the *Lectures on Romans*. On the one hand, the spiritual man (symbolized by the Holy of Holies) is equal to the higher part of the reason or the higher mind, filled by God who alone dwells in it. The carnal man is associated with the lower reason illuminated by its own natural light. On the other hand, Luther calls the higher part "intellect" and the lower part "reason", also drawing a terminological distinction between these two. The forecourt of the Tabernacle represents the senses. An interesting feature here is also how Luther, closely following classical distinctions on mystical theology, associates mystical theology with the highest part, proper theology with the reason and symbolic theology with the senses.<sup>329</sup>

In the second important anthropological passage in the *Lectures on Hebrews* Luther discusses the nature of the rest God will give to his people. This passage also sheds light on how Luther at this point in time understands the distinctions between the three kinds of theology. The final rest is acquired only in union with the essential work of God:

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<sup>328</sup> WA 57, b197, 6-20: "Alii magis tropologice per 'tabernaculum' [7] intelligunt minorem mundum id est ipsum hominem, qui secundum portionem [8] superiorem rationis versatur in invisibilibus et in his, quae Dei [9] sunt. Sic enim Deus solus, ut in multis locis Augustinus asserit, habitat [10] et replet mentem superiorem hominis, ac per hoc talis homo vere est [11] archa Domini habens propitiatorium, Cherubin, manna et virgam Aaron. [12] 'Sanctum' autem significat rationem inferiorem, quae illuminatur lumine, [13] ut dicunt, naturalis rationis, quod per candelabrum significetur, sensus [14] P Bl. 112b vero carnis \*tandem intelligatur per atrium, in cuius figuram atrium [15] habuit quinque cubitos altitudinis, quia 5 tantum sensus. Et breviter [16] ad istum modum sensus est atrium, ratio est sanctum, intellectus sanctum [17] sanctorum, qui sunt tres illi homines a Paulo celebrati, scilicet animalis, [18] carnalis, spiritualis. Et in singulis suis est ritus et sua theologia, suis [19] cultus Dei, quibus respondet triplex illa theologia: simbolica sensui, [20] propria rationi, mystica intellectui."

<sup>329</sup> Luther's division between *sensus*, *ratio superior*, *ratio inferior* appears to be borrowed from Augustine and Gerson (the latter employs the triad *sensus*, *ratio*, *mens vel apex mentis sive synthesis*). Luther replaces Gerson's highest part, the "apex mentis" with intellect/faith. See Luther's glosses to Tauler's sermons, WA 9, 97, 1-5; 99, 36-40; 103, 39-41. Luther also refers in the same glosses to the distinction between proper and mystical theology, WA 9, 98, 14-34. On the history of the concepts of *ratio superior* and *inferior* see footnote 325.



In order that we may grasp in some measure the nature of that rest, it is necessary to note that man, like Noah's ark, "has three chambers" and is divided into three men, namely, the sensual, the rational, and the spiritual. || Man is called a microcosm, that is, a smaller world. || Every one of those men rests and is disturbed or troubled in a twofold way: namely, either from within [*ab intra*] or from without [*ab extra*].

In the first place, the sensual man is brought to rest from without when he receives pleasure from a sensible object, which is to rest positively. On the other hand, he is disturbed and troubled when the sensible object is disturbed or removed. But he truly is brought to rest from within when he rests in a privative sense, i.e., when he ceases from work or sensible objects on account of the work of the rational man, as is seen in people who think or speculate. On the other hand, he is disturbed from within when, because of the disturbance of the rational man, he is confused, as is clear in the case of those who are sad and melancholy.

In the second place, the rational man is brought to rest from without and positively in his rational and speculable objects, if they are pleasant. But he is disturbed from without if they are sad. He is brought to rest from within and in a privative sense when the spiritual man, ceasing the work of the rational man, is turned over to faith and the Word. But he is disturbed from within when he is disturbed alongside the disturbance of the spiritual man, namely, when the spiritual man is in peril of losing faith and the Word. For this disturbance is the most horrible of all, since it is innermost and next to hell.

In the third place, the spiritual man is brought to rest from without in the Word and in faith, namely positively, as long as the object of faith, i.e., the Word, remains fixed in him. But he is disturbed from without in the peril of faith (as has been said) and when the Word is taken away, as happens when faith, hope, and love are tested. This is namely the man who "lives in the Word of God". He truly is brought to rest from within, however, when he rests privatively, namely, when he is withdrawn from faith and the Word into the essential work of God, which is the very birth of the uncreated Word, as he says: "This is eternal life, that they know Thee, the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent", that is, the procession of the Son from the Father. And here there is no disturbance from within, for this seventh day has no evening by which it could pass over into another day. And from what has been stated one gets, in a way, a brief exposition of both kinds of theology, namely, the affirmative and the negative.<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> WA 57, b158,18 – b160, 1: "[18] D Bl. 31b. Ut aliquatenus apprehendamus illius requiei modum, notandum, [19] quod homo sicut arca Noë est 'tricameratus' et in tres homines divisus, [20] scil. sensualem, rationalem et spiritualem. || homo dicitur microcosmos [21] i. e. minor mundus || Quilibet illorum dupliciter quiescit et inquietatur [1] seu laborat, videlicet vel ab intra vel ab extra. Primum sensualis ab [2] extra quiescit, quando in sensibili obiecto delectatur, quod est positive [3] quiescere; rursum turbatur et laborat, quando sensibile obiectum turbatur [4] vel aufertur. Ab intra vero quiescit, quando privative quiescit, i. e. [5] dum cessat ab opere vel obiectis sensibilibus propter opus rationalis [6] hominis, ut patet in cogitabundis et speculativis hominibus; rursum [7] turbatur ab intra, quando ad turbacionem hominis rationalis confunditur, [8] ut patet in tristibus et melancolicis. Secundo rationalis homo quiescit [9] ab extra et positive in obiectis suis rationalibus et speculabilibus, si [10] fuerint iocunda; turbatur autem ab extra, si fuerint tristia. Ab intra [11] vero quiescit et privative, quando cessante opere eius spiritualis homo in [12] fide et verbo versatur; turbatur autem ab intra, quando ad turbacionem [13] spiritualis hominis, scil. in fide et verbo periclitantis, et ipse turbatur, [14] hec enim turbacio est omnium horribilissima, quia intima et proxima [15] inferno. Tercio spiritualis homo ab extra requiescit in verbo et fide, [16] scil. positive, dum obiectum fidei i. e. verbum ei infixum manserit. [17] Turbatur autem ab extra in periculo fidei (ut dictum est) et verbi subtraccione, [18] ut fit in temptacionibus fidei, spei et charitatis; hic est enim [19] homo, qui

These three men (at this place called sensual, rational and spiritual) form a hierarchy, which Luther here compares to the three chambers of the Noah's ark, a figure found in the Victorine mystical texts.<sup>331</sup> Each man has its proper object as well as an external and an internal rest. The external rest is found in each man's turning towards its own external object. Internal rest is received when the man who holds the higher place in the hierarchy receives his rest, which results in the lower man withdrawing from its proper object. The theme of passivity, connected with turning inwards, is clear here as well. Finally, the supreme rest of the spiritual man, lies in direct and essential union with God, in which the word and faith are left behind. Because this rest has no end, it can be properly understood only as referring to the heavenly reality, as also Luther's allegory of the seventh day, when God rested, shows. The external rest of the spiritual man, described as word and faith, should however not be understood as rest in an external, separated and merely sensible object in the sense that it excludes an internal union with God through word and faith. Rather, this external rest should be understood in the light of the reality of the Incarnation and the theology of the three stages of God's works, where God is already really participated into hiddenly via the external means of grace in the stage of the Church. This participation happens through the external means of grace, which when received are grasped internally by the spirit in faith, but which still hide the divine reality within themselves and within the cloud of faith. Thus the word can be said to remain fixed *in* the believer (*verbum ei infixum manserit*), presupposing an internal relation. Christ is already present in the spiritual man through faith, but the divinity is still hidden by the humanity and the veil of faith.<sup>332</sup>

Luther's writings also contain examination of the development of theological anthropology, especially with regard to Origen's Jerome's and Augustine's reading of Paul. The *Lectures on Hebrews* contain the following comment on Hebr. 4:12:

From philosophy it is said that substantial form is indivisible, especially the human form. Hence come those thickets of opinions on whether the powers of the soul differ actually [*realiter*], substantially [*substancialiter*], or formally [*formaliter*]. || A habit results from

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'vivit in verbo Dei'. Ab intra vero quiescit, quando privative [20] quiescit, scil. a fide et verbo sublatus in opus essenciale Dei, quod est [21] ipsa nativitas Verbi increati, sicut dicit: 'Hec est vita eterna, ut cognoscant [22] te, Deum verum, et quem misisti Ihesum Christum' i. e. processionem [23] filii a patre. Et hic non est turbacio ab intra, quia hic septimus [24] dies non habet vesperam, qua possit transire in alium diem. Et ex his [1] patet aliquo modo utriusque theologie scil. affirmative et negative brevis [2] declaracio."

<sup>331</sup> Examples of this are Hugh of St. Victor's *De arca Noe mystica* and *De arca Noe morali*, but the distinctions Luther draws are simple compared to Hugh's multi-faceted allegories. Nevertheless, there are common features: The progress of the meditation from the external to the internal proceeds through the chambers of the Ark, with the goal being the rest in God in which the human being is elevated above himself. See McGinn 1994, 376-381.

<sup>332</sup> See chapters 2.3.3.3, 2.4.2.1, 3.3.1 and 3.4. Cf. Joest 1967, 178-183, whose relational interpretation which excludes the internal relation and participation in the reality behind the word makes him state explicitly, that he does not understand the passage. Furthermore Joest's interpretation, which makes it seem that there is a break between the *Dictata* and the *Lectures on Romans*, and again a return to the scheme of the *Dictata* in the *Lectures on Hebrews*, shows the untenability of Joest's readings of Luther's anthropological passages, especially his disregard for the hierarchy between the spiritual and the temporal in Luther's (tripartite) anthropological scheme. Stoellger 2010, 223-225 does not understand the text either. He does not notice that the final seven day rest is related to eternal life (*vita eterna*). Stoellger reads participation in the procession of the uncreated word as a reference to faith, though Luther in the text clearly states that the human being is raised from faith to that final rest.

frequently repeated acts. || Proceeding simply in faith we follow the apostle, who, in 1 Thessalonians last [chapter 5] divides man into three parts, saying: “May your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of the Lord.” On the other hand, in 1 Cor. chapter 14 he divides man into mind and spirit, saying: “I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the mind.” But the Blessed Virgin Mary also says: “He has scattered the proud in the mind of their hearts”. Indeed, Christ himself makes distinctions in various ways when He says: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul”, with all your strength, or “with all your powers.” Above others, Origen labored with this matter; and after him St. Jerome says with reference to Gal. 5:17 that the body or the flesh is our lowest part, known to all; the spirit on the other hand is the highest part by which we are capable of divine things; the soul however is the middle part between the two. If they are understood in the way St. Augustine, too, divides man into a higher and a lower part and the senses, they are clear and have been satisfactorily stated above.<sup>333</sup>

The passage illustrates how the previously discussed differences in the scheme regarding the nature of the soul can be understood. On the one hand Luther refers here to the question discussed particularly by the Nominalists (foremost of all by Ockham), of regarding whether there can be multiple forms in the human being, and regarding how the powers of the soul differ from each other (in an ontological sense).<sup>334</sup> The point of Luther’s introducing this issue here may lie the question; if there is one indivisible form, how can there be contradictory affects in the human being, as is the case between the spirit and the flesh? The text is not explicit on Luther’s reasoning, however. Without really answering the philosophical question, Luther (after reviewing a number of biblical passages) harmonizes the views of Origen and Jerome with that of St. Augustine regarding the idea of the soul as the intermediate part of the person.<sup>335</sup> However, Luther returns to the same question later in his early *Commentary on Galatians* (WA 2) when he comments on Gal. 5:17 “The flesh lusts against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh”.<sup>336</sup> The first edition of the work, printed in 1519, contains the following passage:

Just as “spirit” in this passage does not signify chastity alone, so it follows necessarily that “flesh” does not signify lust alone. I have had to say this because it has become an

<sup>333</sup> WA 57, b162, 24 – b163, 17: “[24] Ex philosophia dicitur formam substancialem esse indivisibilem, [1] maxime vero humanam. Hinc illa opinionum spineta, utrum realiter [an] [2] substancialiter an formaliter differant vires animae. || ex actibus sepe [3] repetitis fit habitus || Verum simpliciter in fide ambulantes Apostolum [4] sequemur, qui 1. Thes. ultimo distinguit hominem in tres porciones [5] dicens: ‘Ut integer spiritus vester et anima et corpus sine querela in adventum [6] Domini servetur.’ Rursum 1. ad Co. cap. 14. distinguit hominem [7] in mentem et spiritum dicens: ‘Psallam spiritu, psallam et mente.’ Sed [8] et b. virgo Maria dicit: ‘Dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.’ Imo [9] Christus ipse varie distinguit dicens: ‘Diliges dominum Deum tuum ex [10] toto corde tuo, ex tota mente tua, ex tota anima tua’, ex tota fortitudine [11] tua sive ‘ex omnibus viribus tuis’. In hac igitur re laboravit pre ceteris [12] Origenes et post eum b. Hiero[nimus] ad Gal. 5., ut sit corpus seu caro [13] infima porcio nostra nota omnibus, spiritus vero suprema porcio, qua [14] divinorum capaces sumus, anima vero media porcio inter utramque. [15] Que si intelligantur quomodo et b. Aug[ustinus] distribuit hominem in [16] porcionem superiorem et inferiorem ac sensum, plana sunt ac satis dicta [17] superius.”

<sup>334</sup> See Hirvonen 2004, 47-74; Kärkkäinen 2007, 264-270.

<sup>335</sup> On this background see Joest 1967, 142-148.

<sup>336</sup> WA 2, 585, 8-9: “[8] [Gal. 5, 17.] Caro enim concupiscit adversus spiritum, spiritus autem [9] adversus carnem.”

established usage almost among all to understand “desires of the flesh” only in the sense of “lust.” According to this usage, it would be impossible for the apostle to be understood. In his excellent treatment of this thought in Rom. 7 he explains it at greater length and says: “For I delight in the Law of God according to the internal man, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which is in my members.” For Paul did not say this in the role of others, as St. Augustine, in the eleventh chapter of the sixth book of his *Against Julian*, states that he had once understood or rather misunderstood him; but that, he says, is how the Manichaeans and the Pelagians understood Paul. Thus St. Peter, in his first epistle chapter 2 says: “I beseech you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the carnal desires that wage war against the soul.” Here St. Jerome involves himself deeply in the question how to find a neutral ground and neutral works between the flesh and the spirit. Following his Origen, he distinguishes spirit, soul, and flesh and distributes them into spiritual, animal and carnal man. And although this threeness seems to be established from 1 Thess. last [5th] chapter, where we read: “May your spirit and soul and body be kept, etc.”, **still I do not venture to agree or disagree, both because in the passage quoted Peter obviously takes spirit and soul as being the same, since he calls it the soul that the desires make war against, whereas Paul says that the desires of the flesh lust against the spirit, and also because to me the Apostle seems to take carnal and animal man as being the same.**<sup>337</sup>

The section exhibits a similar uncertainty as that appearing in the previously discussed works regarding the status of the soul: whether or not it can be conceived of as a neutral medium, or a part of the fallen carnality. In this passage, Luther expresses his hesitations explicitly (part in bold).<sup>338</sup> However at the same location on the second printed edition of the same commentary, revised by Luther and published in 1523 (marked H in WA 2), Luther replaces the part of the above quote appearing in bold with the following passage:

still he appears in 1. Cor. 2 to sufficiently condemn also the animal man, when he says:  
The animal man does not perceive those things that are of God’s spirit. Thus because the

<sup>337</sup> WA 2, 585, 10-30: “[10] Sicut ‘spiritus’ hoc loco non significat solam castitatem, ita necesse [11] est, ut ‘caro’ non solam significet libidinem. hoc pro necessitate dixi, quia [12] inveteravit usus fere apud omnes, carnis concupiscentiam pro libidine tantum [13] [Röm. 7, 22 f.] accipi, quo usu Apostolus intelligi non posset. Hanc sententiam Rho. vij. [14] egregie tractans et copiosius declarans dicit: Condelector enim legi dei [15] secundum interiorem hominem, video autem aliam legem in membris meis [16] repugnantem legi mentis meae, captivantem me in legem peccati, quae est [17] in membris meis &c. Non enim haec in persona aliorum locutus est Paulus, [18] sicut beatus Augustinus lib. vi. contra Iul. c. xi. dicit se aliquando intellexisse, [19] immo non intellexisse, Manicheos autem dicit et Pelagianos sic intellexisse. [20] [1. Petr. 2, 11.] Sic beatus Petrus c. ij. Epist. i. Obsecro vos tanquam advenas et peregrinos [21] abstinere vos a carnalibus desyderiis, quae militant adversus animam. [22] D. Hieronymus hoc loco profunde se quaestioni involvit, quomodo inter [23] spiritum et carnem medium inveniat et media opera, et suum Origenem [24] secutus spiritum, animam, carnem distinguit, inde spiritualem, animalem et [25] carnalem hominem distribuit. Et quanquam ista trinitas videatur statui ex [26] [1. Thess. 5, 23.] illo i. Thess. ult. ut integer spiritus vester et anima et corpus servetur &c., [27] tamen nec accedere nec recedere audeo, tum quod spiritum et animam manifeste [28] pro eodem accipit Petrus in dicto loco, appellans animam, contra quam [29] militant desyderia, ubi contra spiritum concupiscere carnem dicit Paulus, et [30] hominem carnalem ac animalem mihi pro eodem Apostolus videtur accipere.”

<sup>338</sup> Luther continues the discussion in this text by stating that he does not separate between the flesh, soul and spirit. Rather, he says, he means by them the whole man – especially the soul – with regard to whether the person seeks “those things that are of God” and follows God’s law, or battles against God. (WA 2, 585, 31 – 586, 18). The question of the relationship of the bipartite anthropology to the tripartite anthropology will be addressed in the following subchapters.

animal man does not live a spiritual life nor is moved spiritually, it is not to be doubted that the Apostle wished the animal and carnal man to be the same. Therefore no one has been right who has adopted neutral works from Origen's sentences. We see already at Gen. 2 that the animal man is called the one who is provided with natural life and movement.<sup>339</sup>

Thus at the latest in the 1523 revision of the early *Commentary on Galatians* Luther comes to a definite and express conclusion that the animal man and animal life constitute the opposite of the spiritual man and spiritual life. In addition the "carnal man", by which Luther means the soul and the rational capacities of the fallen human being, also form a part of the sinful animal life directed by the soul and opposed to the spirit. The animal man is not receptive to spiritual things nor can he be affected by them. The place of the soul is thus confirmed as being related to the natural life and natural movement of the human being. This position seems to be connected to the Aristotelian idea of the soul as the mover and animator of the body. Luther's conclusion seems to focus, however, on removing any doubt that there might be a neutral intermediate part in the natural constitution of the human being, a part of the human being which could (without grace) merit justification or turn towards spiritual things. The only part or constituent of the human being capable of being turned towards God is the spiritual man or the spirit, the *imago Dei* received in the soul *ab extra* in faith.

The final text<sup>340</sup> on the threefold anthropology to be considered is Luther's explanation of Luke 1:46: "My soul magnifies God, the Lord" in his 1521 *Commentary on the Magnificat* (WA 7, 538-604). Here Luther once again illustrates his anthropology with the image of the Tabernacle:

We wish to observe the words one by one. The first is "my soul." Scripture divides man into three parts, as St. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians last [5. chapter]: "May the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And each of these three as well as the whole man is also divided in another way into two parts, which are the spirit and the flesh. This latter division is not a division of the nature, but of the qualities. That is: the nature has three parts: spirit, soul and body, and all of these together may either be good or

<sup>339</sup> WA 585, comment on lines 27-30: "H 27-30 **Statt der Worte** tamen nee accedere bis videtur accipere **steht in** H: tamen satis apparet ex 1. Cor. 2. et animale[m] hominem damnari, cum ait: Animalis homo non percipit ea, quae sunt spiritus dei. Itaque cum animalis homo non vivat vita spiritus nec moveatur spiritualiter, non dubium est, quin animale[m] et carnalem hominem Apostolus eundem esse velit. Quare nemo recte collegerit ex Origenis sententia media quedam opera. Iam et Gen. 2. videmus, animale[m] hominem dici, qui naturali vita et motu praeditus est"

<sup>340</sup> *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519-21), Luther's second major work on the Psalms does not contain detailed discussion on the natural constitution of the person. However, it does contain a few sections related to the image of the human being as Tabernacle. One section uses the figure of standing at the doorway of the tent in referring to people who are led only by their reason and senses (AWA 2, 106, 9-13); the other speaks about Christ dwelling in the darkness of the Holy of Holies, i.e., the Church and the human heart (WA 5, 506, 6 -30). The entire work, however, is to a large extent dominated by the qualitative distinction between flesh and spirit, connected to the basic affect of the person. Sometimes Luther in the commentary uses also the terms (human) nature and grace to refer to these two (see e.g. AWA 2, 40, 6-10; 74, 60-10; 185, 7 – 186, 5; 261, 23 -262, 5; 550, 17-24; WA 5, 564, 35 – 565, 13). Nevertheless, the distinctions between the old man of the Old Creation and the new man of the New Creation appear in this work (WA 5, 543, 35 – 544, 14). In addition, Luther employs the distinction between animal life and spiritual life. He connects spiritual life to invisible things and animal life to sensual and rational things (AWA 2, 108, 6-14; WA 5, 669, 37 – 671, 17).

evil – that is, they may be spirit or flesh – but this is not the issue under discussion at the moment.

The first part, the spirit, is the highest, deepest and most noble part of man, by which he is able to grasp non-concrete [or: incomprehensible], invisible and eternal things. And it is, in brief, the house where faith and the word of God dwell inside. David says of it in Psalm 51 [Vulg: 50]: “Lord, create in my innermost parts a right spirit,” that is, a straight and upright faith. But of the unbelieving he says in Psalm 78 [Vulg: 77]: “Their heart was not right towards God, nor was their spirit in faith to Him.”

The second part, the soul, is also of the same spirit in its nature, but it has a different task, namely, that it makes the body alive and works through it and is therefore often called in the Scriptures ‘life’. The spirit may well live without the body, but the body does not live without the spirit. We see this part in how it works and lives also in sleep and without ceasing. And its ability is not to understand the non-concrete [incomprehensible] things, but those which the reason can know and measure. The reason is namely the light in this house, and if the spirit illuminated with faith as if by a higher light does not rule this lower light of reason, it cannot ever be without error. It is namely too feeble to deal with divine things. To these two parts the Scriptures attribute many things such as *sapientia* and *scientia*: wisdom to the spirit, knowledge to the soul and likewise hatred, love, sorrow and the like.

The third part is the body with its members, the job of which is the practise and application of that which the soul knows and the spirit believes. An illustration from Scripture will show this: Moses made a tabernacle with three separate compartments. The first one was called the *sanctum sanctorum*. It was the dwelling place of God and there was no light inside it. The second was called the *sanctum*. There stood a candelabrum with seven arms and lamps. The third was called the *atrium*, the court, and it was publicly under the sky in the light of the sun. In the same figure a Christian man is portrayed. His spirit is the *sanctum sanctorum*, the dwelling place of God in gloomy faith without light because he believes in that which he does not see, feel or comprehend [or: grasp]. His soul is the *sanctum*. There are the seven lights, that is, all kind of understanding, discrimination, knowing and knowledge of bodily and visible things. His body is the *atrium*. It is visible to everyone so that it can be seen what he does and how he lives.

Now Paul prays God, who is the God of peace, to sanctify us not in one part only, but wholly, through and through, so that spirit, soul, body, and all may be holy. We might mention many reasons why he prays in this manner, but let the following suffice. When the spirit is no longer holy, then nothing is holy anymore.

The greatest battle and the greatest danger is in the holiness of the spirit, which depends wholly upon pure faith, because the spirit has nothing to do with concrete [or: comprehensible] things, as is said. Then come false teachers and lure the spirit outside.

One gives this work, another that method of becoming godly, and if the spirit is not protected and wise, it will turn outwards and follow. As soon as it comes to external works and ways and seeks them to become godly, faith is lost and the spirit is dead before God.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> WA 7, 550, 19 – 552, 4: “[19] Wollen ein wort nach dem andernnn bewiegen: das erst ‘Meyn seele’. [20] Die schrifft teilet den menschen ynn drey teil, da S. Paulus 1. Thessal. ult. [21] [1. Thess. 5, 23.] sagt: ‘Got der ein got des frids ist, der mache euch heilig durch und durch, [22] alsozo das ewer gantzer geist und seele und leip unstreflich erhalten auff die [23] zukunfft unszers herrnn Ihesu Christi’. Und ein iglichs dieszer dreier sampt [24] dem gantzen menschen wirt auch geteylet auff ein ander weisz ynn zwey stuck, [25] die da heissen geist und fleisch, wilch teilung nit der natur, szondernnn der [26] eygenschaft ist, das ist,

The passage from the *Commentary on the Magnificat* both continues as well as summarizes the themes of the many previously analysed passages. Therefore one can consider this passage as presenting a mature and developed overall summary of Luther's anthropology.<sup>342</sup> Here Luther defines both tripartite and bipartite anthropologies, their mutual relation, and the function of their individual constituents. The three natural parts of the human being are defined in the passage as the spirit (*geist / Geist*), soul (*seele / Seele*) and body (*leip / Leib*).

The spirit is the highest, noblest and innermost part of man, with which he is able to grasp non-concrete, incomprehensible, invisible, eternal and divine things.<sup>343</sup> It is of the same nature as the soul (and in this sense Luther retains the distinction found in the previous texts between the higher and the lower part), but is distinguished by its object, in

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die natur hat drey stuck: geist, seel, leip, und mugen [27] alle sampt gut oder bosz sein, das heist denn geist und fleysch sein, davon itzt [28] nit zu reden ist. Das erst stuck, der geist, ist das hohste, tieffste, edlste teil [29] des menschen, damit er geschickt ist, unbegreiflich, unsichtige, ewige ding zu [30] fassen. Und ist kurtzlich das hausz, da der glawbe und gottis wort innen [31] [Ps. 51, 12.] wonet. Davon David psal. 1. sagt: 'Her mach ynn meinem ynnwendigsten [32] ein richtigen geyst', das ist einen auffgerichteten stracken glawben. Widderumb [33] [Ps. 78, 37.] von den unglewbigen psal. lxxvij. 'Ihr hertz war nit richtig zu got, und yhr [34] geyst war nit ym glawben zu got'.

[35] Das ander, die seele, ist eben derselbe geist nach der natur, aber doch [36] inn einem andernn werck. Nemlich ynn dem, alsz er den leyp lebendig macht [1] und durch ynn wircket, und wirt offt ynn der schrift fur 'das leben' genommen; [2] denn der geyst mag wol on den leyp leben, aber der leyp lebet nit on den [3] geyst. Disz stuck sehen wir, wie es auch ym schlaff unnd on unterlasz lebet [4] unnd wurckt. Unnd ist sein art nit die unbegrifflichen ding zu fassen, szondernn [5] was die vornunft erkennen unnd ermessen kan. Und ist nemlich die vornunft [6] hie das liecht ynn dieszem hausze, unnd wa der geyst nit mit dem [7] glawben, als mit eynem hohern liecht erleucht, disz liecht der vornunft regiert, [8] so mag sie nimmer on yrthum sein. Denn sie ist zu geringe ynn gotlichen [9] dingen zu handelln. Dieszen zweien stucken eygent die schrift viel dings, als [10] sapientiam und scientiam: die weisheit dem geist, die erkenntnisz der seelen, [11] darnach auch hasz, liebe, lust, gewel und des gleichenn.

[12] Das dritte ist der leip mit seinen gelidernn, wilchs werck sein nur [13] ubungen und prauch, nach dem die seel erkennt und der geist glawbt. Unnd [14] [2. Mos. 26, 33f. u. 40, 1 ff.] das wir des eyn gleichnisz antzeigen ausz der schrift: Moses macht eyn Tabernakell [15] mit dreyen unterschiedlichen gepewen. Das erst hiesz sanctum sanctorum, [16] da wonet got ynnen, unnd war kein liecht drinnen. Das ander, sanctum, [17] da ynnen stund ein leuchter mit sieben rohren und lampen. Das drit hiesz [18] atrium, der hoff, das war unter dem hymel offentlich, fur der sunnen liecht. [19] Inn der selben figur ist ein Christen mensch abgemalet. Sein geist ist sanctum [20] sanctorum, gottis wonung ym finstern glawben on liecht, denn er glewbt, [21] das er nit sihet, noch fulet, noch begreiffet. Sein seel ist sanctum; da sein [22] sieben liecht, das ist, allerley vorstant, underscheid, wissen unnd erkenntnisz der [23] leiplichen, sichtlichen dinger. Sein corper ist atrium; der ist yderman offenbar, [24] das man sehen kan, was er thut, und wie er lebt.

[25] [1. Thess. 5, 23.] Nu bittet Paulus: Got, der ein got des frids ist, wolte unsz heilig [26] machen, nit ynn einem stuck allein szondernn gantz und gar, durch und durch, [27] das geyst, seel und leib und allsz heilig sey. Von ursachen solch gepettis [28] were viel zu sagen, kurtzlich: Wenn der geist nit mehr heilig ist, szo ist nichts [29] mehr heilig. Nu ist der groste streit unnd die groste far ynn des geistis [30] heilickeit, wilche nur ynn dem blossen lautternn glawben steet, die weil der [31] geyst nit mit begreiflichen dingen umbgaht, wie gesagt ist. Szo kommen denn [32] falsche lerer unnd locken den geist erausz, einer gibt fur das werck, der ander [1] die weisze frum zu werden. Wo denn der geist hie nit bewaret wirt und [2] weisze ist, szo fellet er erausz und folget, Kumpt auff die euserlichen werck [3] und weisen, meinete da mit frum zu werden: szo bald ist der glawb vorlorenn, [4] und der geist todt fur got.“

<sup>342</sup> Joest 1967, 183 agrees with this view. On the Tabernacle image see also Olsson 1971, 454-455; Ebeling 1982, 241-250.

<sup>343</sup> One can ask how Luther's term *unbegreiflich* should be understood here, as the term can be used both in a concrete and in an abstract sense. However, neither understanding of the term causes problems for the analysis. The divine and spiritual reality contains for Luther both invisible things (e.g., the presence of God in the sacraments and creation) as well as incomprehensible things (e.g., the divine nature itself), as discussed in chapters 2.2.3, 2.2.4 and 2.3.3.

which it participates. In the human being it is the dwelling place of God and faith. Therefore it is symbolized by the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle, where God appeared on the mercy seat upon the Ark between the Cherubim (Exod. 25:10-22). It is important to note, however, that Luther can speak of this presence of God and knowledge of invisible things in two contradictory ways. On the one hand, he speaks about God being present in gloomy or enigmatic faith (*finsternn glawben*) without light, but on the other hand he calls faith the “higher light” (*eynem hohern liecht*) illuminating the spirit.<sup>344</sup>

For Luther, to put it simply, faith is the true intellect, the higher part of the reason, through which the human being can grasp divine and invisible things. When Luther speaks about it as a “higher light”, this is not merely a metaphor, but the concept is connected to an epistemology of illumination. As evidenced by the texts discussed above which utilize the Tabernacle image, Luther holds that God alone dwells in and fills the higher mind of the human person (i.e., the spirit or intellect). He further holds that it is just by faith that this indwelling and the presence of the glory of God is received by the spiritual person.<sup>345</sup> Furthermore, this presence and reflection of God received in faith by the spiritual person constitutes the *imago Dei* in the human being. The concept of the *imago Dei* is not merely a symbol for Luther, but it signifies real participation in Christ as the substantial and true image and reflection of Father. Precisely as this reflection it carries along with it the ability to grasp invisible, heavenly and divine things.<sup>346</sup> When Luther sets faith at the place of the highest faculty, he combines the Augustinian *superior pars rationis* or *intellectus*, Gerson’s *apex mentis* and Tauler’s *seelengrunt* in his concept, changing the understanding of the highest part of the person from an active capacity for knowing God into a receptive possibility actualized by the light of faith. In accordance with faith taking the role of the highest faculty, Luther calls the knowledge of the spirit *sapientia* (wisdom), which already for Augustine signifies the knowledge of intellectual, immaterial and eternal things, and the knowledge of the soul *scientia*, which is knowledge of mutable, temporal things.<sup>347</sup> However, besides this modification, the general structure of Luther’s

<sup>344</sup> This duality is noted by Schwarz 1962, 144-147 (see especially Schwarz’s footnote 209), who also notes the connections the figure has to Dionysius, Gerson and Bonaventure.

<sup>345</sup> How this epistemology of illumination functions will be discussed at detail in chapter 3.3. Against this view Hägglund emphasizes darkness and passivity in concluding that Luther resists identification of the spirit with divine light; on the contrary the spirit identical with the word. See Hägglund 1959, 323-324. Joest, disregarding the above analysed texts on the image of the Tabernacle which speak of God dwelling in and filling the higher mind, interprets the spirit relationally as faith in the external word. In his view, all such expressions only mean “encounter with Word and Faith” (“*Begegnung von Wort und Glauben*”). See Joest 1967, 184-185.

<sup>346</sup> On the *imago Dei*, especially in Luther’s later works, see Hägglund 1959, 77-91; Olsson 1971, 277-302; Huovinen 1981, 29-39; Huovinen 1984, 133-142; Peura 1990, 121-161; Huovinen 2009, 127-132; Raunio 2010, 34-38. Hägglund’s original interpretation of the image tends towards a relational understanding, while Olsson and Huovinen emphasize the substantial and psychological reality of the *imago*. The image of God confers with it participation in eternal life and knowledge of the will of God: not in a full and complete sense, but in an incipient and growing sense. In the Finnish school represented by Peura, this notion is a central concept for understanding the restoration of human nature that takes place through participation in Christ.

<sup>347</sup> See Luther’s glosses to Tauler’s sermons, WA 9, 97, 1-5; 99, 36-40; 103, 39-41. See also Joest 1967, 175-178; Hägglund 1967, 91; Ozment 1969, 2-3; Olsson 1971, 489-494; Ebeling 1982, 241-250; Stoellger 2010, 220-222; 230. On the Augustinian background see De Trin. XII, 3.3-4.4; 15.25; Mulligan 1955, especially pages 1-4; Nash 2003, 7-9; 63-66. Ebeling recognizes the connection of the *superior pars rationis* to the spirit and to eternal things, but his examination misses its identification with the intellect of faith.



threefold anthropology exhibits a clear connection to the mystical theology of the medieval Augustinian tradition. The Tabernacle image is found in many authors. Bonaventure uses it in his *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* both as an image of the universe and as an image of the human being entering into himself in meditation.<sup>348</sup> Luther's use of this image in his *Commentary on the Magnificat* has usually been traced to tractatus 7 of Gerson's *Collectorium super Magnificat*, but this view seems mistaken.<sup>349</sup> Gerson uses a different division of the human capacities (*mens – ratio – anima*) than Luther, and his reference to the Tabernacle is brief and in passing.<sup>350</sup> However, in the *Collectorium* Gerson refers to Richard and Hugh of St. Victor.<sup>351</sup> Indeed, in the works of the Richard one can find a text which is a great deal closer to Luther's interpretation of the Tabernacle than Gerson's. Richard, in his appendix to and short summary of *Benjamin Major* called *Nonnullae allegoriae tabernaculi foederis*, writes:

By the tabernacle of the covenant the state of perfection is to be understood [...] The tabernacle ought to have an atrium around it. By the atrium understand the discipline of the body, by the tabernacle the discipline of the mind. Where the exterior discipline is lacking, interior discipline cannot be observed. But on the other hand, without the discipline of the mind discipline of the body is not useful. The atrium lies open under the sky and the discipline of the body is visible to all. But what is inside the tabernacle is not visible from

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According to Ebeling, a question mark needs to be added with regard to the capacities of the spirit with respect to eternal things, because Luther stresses their incomprehensible nature as well as faith and the word as the true inhabitants of the spirit. Olsson correctly recognizes Luther's connections to Gerson and the connection of the spirit to the *superior pars rationis* but his work misses Luther's idea that the spirit is dead and empty without faith. Instead he constructs the idea of a carnal spirit, which leads him to argue for a greater distance between Luther and the concept of *superior pars rationis*. Stoellger interprets Luther's replacement of the highest part with faith as an indication of the motif of passivity, stating that Luther is related rather to the passive concept of "nous" than to the active concept of the "intellect". However, for Luther faith has both the side of passive receptivity with regard to the divine light (see chapter 3.3.1), as well as an active side, when it understands other things by that light (see chapter 3.3.2). Stoellger therefore overemphasizes the theme of passivity in Luther's thought.

<sup>348</sup> See *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, III, 1; V, 1.

<sup>349</sup> See STA I, 321 footnote 7 as well as Burger 2007, 41-47. On older attempts to trace the division to Gerson's *De mystica theologia speculativa* pars 2 consideratio 9 (=DP III, 370 C) see Häggglund 1959, 321 footnote 36. The distinction used there (*intelligentia, ratio, sensualitas*) is closer to Luther's text, but does not contain the Tabernacle image. Gerson utilizes the image of the three chambers also at the lectiones *Contra vanam curiositatem* (DP I, 87) in connection to the concept of the different lights that enter the soul. One of the lights Gerson mentions is the light of faith. The text as a whole however does not very closely resemble that of Luther. On Luther's use of Gerson in general see also Olsson 1971, 490-491.

<sup>350</sup> "Assignabimus igitur humano cordi tanquam loco grandi, & spatioso, tria cenacula, supremum, medium & infimum. Primum nominabimus cenaculum mentis; medium vero cenaculum rationis. Tertium erit & infimum, animae cenaculo deputatum. Nolumus tamen, ut statim arbitretur inspector, haec idcirco depingi, quod ita sint; sed ut facilius accipiat figurata, dum incipit, sed non sistat in figuris. Sic per mysticos intellectus arca Noe litteralis, sic Arca foederis, habens instar illius spiritualis quae monstrata est in monte, sic triclinium Samuelis per typum, sic triclinium feminarum in Ester, sic universaliter (ut ad unum dicamus) omnes parabolicae locutiones significatum accipiunt. Sic praeterea coram oculis positum cordis triclinium, in quo mens obtinet summum locum, de quo seorsum consequenter propriae considerationes annectuntur, quod rarius sermo invernitur de mente parcisus. Ratio ponitur in medio, anima stat in imo. Spiritus noster tanquam Architriclinus praesidet toti triclinio, nunc ab arce mentis dilabens ad ultimum animae cenaculum pro administratione sensuum, nunc stat in cenaculo rationis ad investigationem Philosophicae cujuslibet disciplinae." Gerson, *Tractatus septimus super magnificat* (DP IV, 330).

<sup>351</sup> "Triclinium eleganter exposuit, & distinxit, venerabilis Richardus, & ante eum Hugo, fundantes se in Augustino praecipue." Gerson: *Tractatus septimus super magnificat* (DP IV, 331).

the outside. And no one knows that which belongs to the internal man, except of the spirit of the person which is in it. The habit of the internal person is divided into rational and intellectual. By the exterior tabernacle is understood the rational habit, by the internal, the intellectual habit. We call the rational sense that by which we understand ourselves, and the intellectual in this place that by which we are raised up to the speculation of divine things. The man leaves from the tabernacle to the atrium by exercising works. The man enters the first tabernacle when he returns to himself. He enters the second when he transcends himself, because when he transcends himself, he is elevated to God. He stays in the first one by means of consideration of himself, in the second one through contemplation. The atrium, the first tabernacle and the second together had five things for sanctification. The atrium had only one, as well as the second tabernacle. The first tabernacle had the remaining. In the atrium of the tabernacle was the altar of burnt offering. In the first tabernacle, the candelabrum, the table and the altar of incense. In the interior tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant. The external altar: the affliction of the body; the internal altar: the contrition of the mind. Candelabrum: the grace of discretion. Table: the teaching of sacred reading. By the Ark of the Covenant understand the grace of contemplation. [...] The candelabrum is a holder for the lights, discretion is the light of the internal man.<sup>352</sup>

So, whereas Gerson speaks about the threefold composition of the heart (soul, reason, mind), Richard's text operates using the same divisions as Luther: the body, the reason and the intellect. Furthermore, Richard (as Luther) dedicates the divine things to the intellect, and both Richard and Luther attribute the light of the discrimination to the middle part of the Tabernacle: i.e., the reason. Both also emphasize the openness of the body (i.e., the forecourt) for all to see, as well as the hiddenness of the two other parts from outside perception. The difference between the two lies in that Richard highlights the interplay between these two in achieving contemplation: the mode of spirituality is built

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<sup>352</sup> “[Col.0191C] Per tabernaculum foederis intellige statum perfectionis. Ubi perfectio animi, ibi et inhabitatio Dei. Quanto ad perfectionem appropinquatur, tanto mens arctius Deo foederatur. Ipsum autem tabernaculum debet habere circumadjacens atrium. Per [Col.0191D] atrium intellige disciplinam corporis, per tabernaculum disciplinam mentis. Ubi exterior disciplina deest, interior pro certo observari non potest. Disciplina vero corporis inutilis certe sine disciplina mentis. Atrium sub divo et aperto jacet et disciplina corporis omnibus patet. Quae in tabernaculo erant forinsecus non patebant. Et nemo novit quod interioris hominis est, nisi spiritus hominis qui in ipso est. Habitus interioris hominis dividitur in rationalem et intellectualem. Rationalis habitus intelligitur per tabernaculum exterius, intellectualis vero habitus per tabernaculum interius. Sensum rationalem dicimus, quo nostra discernimus; intellectualem hoc loco dicimus, quo ad divinorum [Col.0192C] speculationem sublevamur. Exit homo de tabernaculo in atrium per operis exercitium. Intrat homo tabernaculum primum, cum redit ad seipsum. Intrat in secundum, cum transcendit seipsum. Transcendendo [Col.0192D] sane seipsum elevatur in Deum. In primo moratur homo per considerationem sui, in secundo vero per contemplationem Dei. Ecce de atrio, ecce de tabernaculo primo, vel secundo. Dicta autem atria habebant quinque sanctificia. Atrium habebat solum unum, sicut et secundum tabernaculum. Reliqua horum duorum habebat tabernaculum primum. In atrio tabernaculi erat altare holocausti. In tabernaculo priori candelabrum, mensa, altare incensi. In tabernaculo interiori arca testamenti. Altare exterius, afflictio corporis; altare interius, contritio mentis. Candelabrum, gratia discretionis, mensa, doctrina sacrae lectionis. Per arcam foederis intellige gratiam contemplationis. In altari exteriori animalium carnes concremabantur, et per afflictionem [Col.0193A] corporis carnalia desideria annullantur. In altari inferiori fumus aromatum Domino adolebatur, et per cordis contritionem coelestium desideriorum flagrantia inflammatur. Candelabrum est gestatorium luminis, et discretio est lucerna interioris hominis.” Richard of St. Victor, NONNULLAE ALLEGORIAE TABERNACULI FOEDERIS. PL 196, 0191C – 0193A.

around an active exercise.<sup>353</sup> For Luther, in turn, the external and the internal are set against each other, and active contemplation is replaced by faith, to which is attributed the role of the intellect grasping the divine. This transformation shows both Luther's agreement and disagreement with the theological anthropologies of his predecessors. Luther takes the tripartite construction of human being from the preceding authors and seeks to harmonize their opinions, but makes a subtle yet decisive change at the most important point by replacing the highest ability directed to the divine things with the passively received faith. The consequence is that there remains for Luther no natural ability in the human being for turning to God, only a passive, receptive capacity actualized in the infusion of faith through the means of grace. Nevertheless, this capacity is not only a relational orientation or an act of turning, but is actualized through the divine light of faith. Therefore, even though in these anthropological summaries Luther sometimes calls this capacity the superior part of reason, he more often refers to it as the intellect (of faith), in contrast to reason.

For Luther, the reason, also called the lower part of reason or natural reason, is an ability belonging to the soul. Being a part of the animal and carnal man and directed towards earthly things, it has its own natural light and is useful in its own area in dealing with concrete things. In the Tabernacle it is symbolized by the candelabrum. It is, however, too weak and feeble to grasp the divine things and will err when used in theology.<sup>354</sup> This feebleness offers a partial explanation for how Luther can speak at the same time about the light and darkness of faith. Luther's understanding of the relationship between the light of reason and light of faith may also owe something to Gerson, who in his *De mystica theologia speculativa* contemplates the relationship between the divine light and the abilities of the soul, which he conceives as analogous to natural lights. According to Gerson, even in nature a weaker light looks like a shadow (*umbra*) compared to a brighter light.<sup>355</sup> Luther, however, seems to accentuate this contrast. According to Luther, the light of the natural reason and the light of faith are related to each other as light is to darkness. This is because the natural reason (in the proper sense) was born in the Fall when the knowledge of God was lost, and the capacities of the human being became bound to visible things. Especially in this sense, the natural reason is an opposite of grace.<sup>356</sup> And even when considered from a more neutral perspective and in the spiritual person, the superior divine things are nevertheless hidden from the natural reason as if by superior waters or by a cloud, in which Christ is hidden. For the reason and the soul, the superior divine things are in darkness, whereas for the spirit, Christ who is present in faith is a gloomy light.<sup>357</sup> Nevertheless, the reason is useful when dealing with created, visible, bodily, concrete and measurable things, and will function using concepts, figures and

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<sup>353</sup> See McGinn 1994, 406-407.

<sup>354</sup> Cf. Joest 1967, 160; 185-186; 194-195. Joest interprets Luther's criticism of reason in the *Commentary on the Magnificat* as the break with mystical and platonist tradition, disregarding the distinction existing within that tradition itself between higher and lower reason (of which he is aware), as well as the numerous times this distinction is employed by Luther. The hollowness of Joest's point is demonstrated by the fact that Luther actually follows the same terminology as Richard of St. Victor when distinguishing between *intellectus* and *ratio*.

<sup>355</sup> Gerson, *De mystica theologia speculativa*, consideratio XVII (DP III pars 2, 375).

<sup>356</sup> WA 56, 76, 3-7; 76 gloss 1; 356, 17-357, 17; WA 57, b143, 7-b144, 12.

<sup>357</sup> WA 55, II, 754, 14-19; 804, 138-143. See also chapter 3.4.3.

phantasms derived from them with its natural light, applying them in the arts and sciences.

In addition, the part of the constitution of the human being which Luther calls the “soul” usually refers only to these capacities and abilities connected with the bodily life. Because of its place between the two worlds (the invisible and the visible), the soul is symbolized in the Tabernacle by the Holy. Though it is of the same essence as the spirit, it refers to the spirit as turned towards external things. In this sense, the soul is the animating principle and lifegiver to the body. Thus a human being living a purely external life amidst sensible and rationally cognizable objects and turned towards them can be called *homo animalis*. Sometimes, as we have seen, the soul can nevertheless mean the intermediate part, as if it were the center of the person, which can be turned towards either of the two worlds – analogically with the spirit, which is of the same nature as the soul, but can which be called dead when turned towards created and visible things. Thus the spirit and soul on one hand signify different ‘parts’ or constituents of the person, and on the other hand different aspects of his relationality. Both can also be used in a twofold sense: ontologically they are the same and interchangeable, but derive their meaning from the object they participate in and turn towards.<sup>358</sup> In a certain sense, they can be defined as potencies requiring external actualization, or which are observable in their functions. This is the case especially with the spirit, which is dead and can be disregarded without the indwelling of God. But the same duality between ontological and relational definition is demonstrated by the fact that the soul in itself can be used as a neutral concept (as the lifegiver of the body and a part of the trichotomy) or as a negative concept (when it is related to the person as turned away from the spiritual).

Finally, the body, (when speaking of the natural constitution) simply means the trunk and the limbs. It puts into action that which the spirit and the soul want, and is observable to all. In this sense, the “body” and the “flesh” also do not carry a negative connotation, but are rather natural parts of the human being in this life. In the Tabernacle the body is symbolized by the forecourt, because it is visible and accessible to other people and its sense organs are illuminated by the light of the sun. The entire natural composition of the human being can thus be summarized by the following diagram listing contains the three parts as abstract and their respective objects and capacities:

<b>Spirit</b> ( <i>spiritus</i> )	
Object	God, invisible world
Capacity	<i>intellectus</i> , higher reason
<b>Soul</b> ( <i>anima</i> )	
Object	<i>species</i> , phantasms, concepts etc.
Capacity	<i>ratio</i> , lower reason
<b>Body</b> ( <i>corpus</i> )	
Object	visible and sensible world
Capacity	limbs, five senses

<sup>358</sup> See Olsson 1971, 456-459. On the dual nature of the soul, see also Hägglund 1959, 61-66; Raunio 2010, 42-47. Raunio, however, does not take into account the chronological development concerning the place of the soul in the trichotomy. Likewise, Hägglund misses the fact that the term “soul” is usually associated with the visible and bodily life, and “spirit” with invisible and heavenly life, even though on the ontological level they are of the same nature.

#### 2.4.1.2 The Role of the Spirit as the Determining Part

The text of the *Magnificat* leads to the next anthropological question, that of the qualitative division of the human being into two parts: spirit and flesh. Luther refers to this division briefly at the beginning of the previous chapter's quote from the *Commentary on the Magnificat* (the passage in bold face):

We wish to observe the words one by one. The first is "my soul." Scripture divides man into three parts, as St. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians last [5. chapter]: "May the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." **And each of these three as well as the whole man is also divided in another way into two parts, which are the spirit and the flesh. This latter division is not a division of the nature, but of the qualities. That is: the nature has three parts: spirit, soul and body, and all of these together may either be good or evil – that is, they may be spirit or flesh** – but this is not the issue under discussion at the moment.<sup>359</sup>

The question which arises is: how is the three-part natural division related to the two-part qualitative division between the spirit and the flesh? The meaning of the same terms used in these two distinctions is not identical. Their meaning depends on which of the distinctions is used, although they are also connected to each other in a way that will be demonstrated below.<sup>360</sup> A tentative answer can be found at the end of the same section of the *Commentary on the Magnificat*. There Luther writes:

Now Paul prays God, who is the God of peace, to sanctify us not in one part only, but wholly, through and through, so that spirit, soul, body, and all may be holy. We might mention many reasons why he prays in this manner, but let the following suffice. When the spirit is no longer holy, then nothing is holy anymore.

The greatest battle and the greatest danger is in the holiness of the spirit, which depends wholly upon pure faith, because the spirit has nothing to do with concrete [or: comprehensible] things, as is said. Then come false teachers and lure the spirit outside. One gives this work, another that method of becoming godly, and if the spirit is not

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<sup>359</sup> WA 7, 550, 19-28: "[19] Wollen ein wort nach dem andern bewiegen: das erst 'Meyn seele'. [20] Die schrift teilet den menschen ynn drey teil, da S. Paulus 1. Thessal. ult. [21] [1. Thess. 5, 23.] sagt: 'Got der ein got des frids ist, der mache euch heilig durch und durch, [22] also das ewer gantzer geist und seele und leip unstreflich erhalten auff die [23] zukunfft unszers herrnn Ihesu Christi'. Und ein iglichs dieszer dreier sampt [24] dem gantzen menschen wirt auch geteylet auff ein ander weisz ynn zwey stuck, [25] die da heissen geist und fleisch, wilch teilung nit der natur, szondern der [26] eygenschaft ist, das ist, die natur hat drey stuck: geist, seel, leip, und mugen [27] alle sampt gut oder bosz sein, das heist denn geist und fleysch sein, davon itzt [28] nit zu reden ist."

<sup>360</sup> See Haikola 1958, 24-31; Olsson 1971, 454-462; Huovinen 1981, 42-44; Stoellger 2010, 226-227. Even Häggund 1959, 313-316, though not making an adequate distinction between the two anthropologies, correctly notices the two different uses of the terms *caro* and *spiritus* (as pertaining to part and orientation). See also WA 18, 735, 31-35 as pointed out by Häggund. Luther's distinction between the natural and qualitative meaning of the terms may be at least partially indebted to Gabriel Biel, who likewise separates the parts of man from the theological orientations, see Oberman 1963, 58-60.

protected and wise, it will turn outwards and follow. As soon as it comes to external works and ways and seeks them to become godly, faith is lost and the spirit is dead before God.<sup>361</sup>

Luther argues in the *Commentary on the Magnificat* that spirit (which is the highest and most noble part of the person) is as also the part on which the quality of the person depends. If the spirit is not holy, then nothing in the person is holy. Therefore, it is the spirit which determines the nature or quality of the person before God. With regard to this, there are only two possible options: either the spirit is turned inwards toward God and invisible things, participates in them, and the person remains holy and spiritual, or the spirit turns outwards toward the world and created things, so that the person ceases to be holy and is consequently made carnal. This is the foundation of the bipartite distinction between the flesh and the spirit. . Thus Luther writes that the holiness of the spirit is always threatened, because it depends wholly upon pure faith, not upon concrete (or comprehensible) things. False teaching can cause the spirit to lay its trust upon the external, from which follows instantly the loss of faith and the death of the spirit, as faith and spiritual life are received externally from the object of faith (God), and do not exist as the human being's own property. The same idea was portrayed in the previous chapter as turning the face towards created things and the backside to God, as the internal man moving into and becoming the external carnal man, and as the spirit becoming deserted and migrating to the flesh. The orientation of the spirit determines the standing of the person before God. Because of this, the distinction between flesh and spirit, spiritual and carnal, can be called the "qualitative division."

Moreover, as one can observe, Luther connects spirit and faith closely with each other. This is not surprising, since already in the *Dictata super Psalterium* (1513-15) Luther equates the spirit with faith.<sup>362</sup> Spirit is the dwelling place of God in the human being. The presence of God and the knowledge of invisible things are realized in the spirit, but only through faith by which the spirit partakes in divine reality. Therefore Luther can say that a human person is spiritual and has a spirit (or at least has anything more than a dead spirit) only insofar he or she has faith. Faith is the reality connecting a person to God and allowing him or her to be in touch with invisible reality. In this sense Luther also equates spirit and faith with the intellect: the capacity to grasp the invisible.<sup>363</sup> Luther also calls faith a "foothold" (*locus*) which is fixed on the soul – or rather the soul is fixed upon it as upon a solid rock (*petra*). Luther states that this foothold is no transitory thing, but rather most firm and wide, allowing the person to ascend to the knowledge of God. It is nothing

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<sup>361</sup> WA 7, 551, 25 – 552, 4: "[25] [1. Thess. 5, 23.] Nu bittet Paulus: Got, der ein got des frids ist, wolte unsz heilig [26] machen, nit ynn einem stuck allein szondernn gantz und gar, durch und durch, [27] das geyst, seel und leib und allisz heilig sey. Von ursachen solch gepettis [28] were viel zu sagen, kurtzlich: Wenn der geist nit mehr heilig ist, szo ist nichts [29] mehr heilig. Nu ist der groste streit unnd die groste far ynn des geistis [30] heilickheit, wilche nur ynn dem blossen lautternn glawben steet, die weil der [31] geyst nit mit begreiflichen dingen umbgaht, wie gesagt ist. Szo kommen denn [32] falsche lerer unnd locken den geist erausz, einer gibt fur das werck, der ander [1] die weisze frum zu werden. Wo denn der geist hie nit bewaret wirt und [2] weisze ist, szo fellet er erausz und folget, Kumpt auff die euszerlichen werck [3] und weiszen, meinert da mit frum zu werden: szo bald ist der glawb vorlorenn, [4] und der geist todt fur got."

<sup>362</sup> WA 55, I, 798, 22-24; WA 55, II, 152, 13-22. See also Hunzinger 1905, 60-61.

<sup>363</sup> WA 55, I, 24 gloss 13; 101, 1-4; 118, 1-2; 278, 2-3; 292, 18; 520 gloss 17; 782, 15-16; WA 55, II, 121, 11-13; 341, 101-102; 481, 481-483; 718, 13-14; 734, 109-111; 942, 1455-1456; 974, 2378; 1008, 3400-3401; WA 56, 238, 28; AWA 2, 107, 30-31.

temporal and fleeting, but the eternal Word of Christ.<sup>364</sup> As such participation in the divine reality, faith is the light of the face of God and the fullness (*plenitudo*) of souls.<sup>365</sup> With regard to his mind and spirit, the human being is created such, that he can be satisfied spiritually only by God (*Dei capax est et solo Deo saturari potest*). Therefore, in the *Commentary on Romans* Luther can state that the spiritual life flows from Christ through faith to the believer as eternal rays from the eternal Sun. The grace of faith (*gratia fidei*) regenerates the person so that he or she becomes a spiritual man, and begins to live an eternal and spiritual life.<sup>366</sup> Or, as Luther writes in *Commentary of Galatians* (1519): Faith makes a person spiritual, works make a person carnal. The spirit accepts the Word of God hiddenly and internally, and so is justified.<sup>367</sup> Thus it is precisely the spirit endowed with faith which allows the person to live a spiritual life and be oriented towards the invisible, spiritual and eternal things. When participated in in faith, these things, flowing from God, satisfy the person with their fullness and make him or her a spiritual man.

The contrary happens when a person turns away from spiritual things and loses his or her faith. There is some variation in Luther's texts regarding whether it is the will (love, affect, *fruitio*) or intellect (spirit, faith) that turns away from God first. Regardless, Luther portrays the results in a consistent fashion. When one turns away from God, one loses the knowledge of God and begins to love things that are created and should be used (*fruitur utibili*). These things offer no permanent foothold, and thus one who loves them becomes empty (*vacuus*) and like nothing (*nihil*). Intellectually, this emptiness corresponds to blindness: The person has turned away from God and has become empty of truth. He is in darkness and can now only err in spiritual things.<sup>368</sup> Thus once turned away, human beings

<sup>364</sup> WA 55, II, 641, 335 – 642, 357: “[335] 3, 651 ‘In loco quem posuit’, quomodo hoc consonat huic, ‘fontem [336] ponent eam’? Quare locum hic mystice oportet accipi. [[‘[L]ocum’, vt [337] Psal. 78.: ‘[L]ocum eius desolauerunt’ exposui. [Quia] ‘Locus’ Est vnus cuiusque [338] propositum, vt [i]n tentatione Christi [pa]tet, Quomodo diabolus [339] [e]um de loco ad [lo]cum transtulit. Sic [erg]o vnum fixum est propositum [340] assumendum, quod non sit transitoria res.]] Sic enim fides est ‘Locus’ [341] anime, Quia domus conscientie nostre, sicut et tota Ecclesia ponitur ‘supra [342] firmam petram’ i. e. super fidem Christi. Hęc petra enim est firmissimus [343] locus et spaciosus, de quo Psal. 39.: ‘Et statuit supra petram pedes [344] meos.’ Et alibi: ‘Et statuit in loco spaciose pedes meos.’ Et Psal. 30.: ‘Esto [345] mihi in domum refugii et in locum munitum.’ Sed Ecce nostram translationem, [346] quam proprie loquatur. Nullus enim poterit ascensiones in corde [347] disponere et ex libertate vias Dei ire, nisi primum fixe ponat eas in loco [348] fidei, immo nisi fidem prius firmiter ponat. Qui enim dubitat et hesitat in [349] fide, que est substantia, quomodo ascendet? Ideo dicit, Quod ascensiones [350] in loco disponantur, quem tamen prius solide posuerit. Sic enim Christus [351] in Euangelio: ‘Crede’, ‘credite’, ‘confidite’, ‘credenti omnia possibile sunt’ [352] etc. Maxima enim vis est in fide statuenda, vnde Psal[mus] in fine: ‘Beatus [353] homo, qui confidit in te.’ Sed hoc non est locum ponere, immo pedes potius [354] ponere in loco. Quare Locum ponere Est eligere fixum, in quo homo fide et [355] spe nitatur, i. e. in nullum temporale, quod poni non potest, Sed semper [356] fluit; Sed in æternum, scil. verbum Christi, quod ‘manet in æternum’, quia [357] ‘positum est’ etc.”

See also WA 55, I, 586, 4.5; gloss 8; 55, II, 218, 2 – 219, 16.

<sup>365</sup> WA 55, I, 648-650 gloss 17, 6-9; 798, 22-24.

<sup>366</sup> WA 56, 66, 5 – 67, 1; 327, 9-14; 327, 26 – 328, 2; 373, 2-6.

<sup>367</sup> WA 2, 564, 35 – 565, 7; 570, 5-20.

<sup>368</sup> WA 56, 12, 4-7: “**non sicut deum glorificauerunt** Sed mox sibi gloriam [4] tante cognitionis inflexerunt | scil. quasi subtilitate ingenii cognouissent | [5] **aut gratias egerunt**: de tantis bonis creatis et de ipsa cognitione **sed** [6] **euanuerunt** vacuati veritate vani et nihil facti sunt, licet coram [7] hominibus magni et sapientes facti sunt ac velut omnia scientes”

WA 56, 178, 24 – 179, 9: “[24] Vide ergo ordinem et gradus perditionis. Primus est Ingratitudo [25] seu omissio gratitudinis. Sic enim Lucifer ingratus fuit Creatori suo, [26] antequam caderet. Quod facit ipsa complacentia sui, qua in acceptis non [27] vt acceptis delectatur pretermisso eo, qui dedit. Secundus Vanitas,

no longer know either God or spiritual good. Luther states that no one can think rightly about God without the spirit.<sup>369</sup> With regard to the will, the Fall has the following consequence: because a human being has to love something, but has lost the knowledge of God, the love of the fallen humanity has turned towards created things:<sup>370</sup> things which are empty, fleeting, vain and transitory. Through this love, men themselves have become transitory, as one becomes like the object of one's love. They have lost the internal man and become empty of faith and grace – and with it of the divine plenitude. Because of this loss Luther frequently states that every man is emptiness (*vanitas*) and seeks a lie.<sup>371</sup> He has become wholly carnal and is no longer spiritual. He is mentally and spiritually blind, and no longer able to think, speak or work rightly with regard to God.<sup>372</sup> Even worse, from this combination of the necessity to have an ultimate object of love (*frutio*), and the loss of

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[28] Quia scil. in seipso et in creatura pascitur et fruitur vtibili et ita necessario [29] vanus fit 'in cogitationibus suis' i. e. omnibus consiliis, studiis et Industriis. [30] Quia quicquid in iis et per hec querit, totum vanum est, cum non nisi seipsum [1] Bl. 36. querat i. e. gloriam, delectionem et vtilitatem suam. \*Tercius [2] est excecatio, Quia euacuatus veritate et immersus vanitati toto [3] affectu et omnibus cogitationibus necessario cecus fit, cum sit penitus [4] auersus. Tunc iam in tenebris positus Quid aliud agat, nisi quod sequitur [5] errans et insipiens? Quia Cecus facillime errat, immo semper errat. Ideo [6] Quartus est Error erga Deum, qui est pessimus, qui facit idolatras. Huc [7] autem venisse est in profundum venisse. Quia amisso Deo nihil iam restat, [8] quam quod sit traditus in omnem turpitudinem secundum voluntatem [9] diaboli."

WA 56, 241, 6-25: "[6] Alio modo etiam 'inutiles' dicuntur, Quia Deo inutiles sunt et [7] sibi. Sed prior sententia melior, quia Vult probare, quod vani facti sunt [8] eo, quod declinauerunt a veritate et Iustitia Dei ad sua propria. [9] Possunt autem ista tria per modum iterationis et ad maiorem expressionem [10] dicta intelligi, Vt, quod dictum est: 'Non est Iustus quisquam' [11] Sit id, quod dicitur: 'Omnes declinauerunt'; Et quod dictum [12] est: 'Non est Intelligens', Sit illud: 'Simul inutiles facti sunt'; Et quod [13] dictum est: 'Non est requirens Deum', Sit illud: **Non est qui faciat bonum** [14] [3, 12]. [15] Siquidem 'declinare' hoc est Iniustum fieri. Et Vanum fieri hoc est [16] veritatem amittere in intellectu et vanitatem meditari. Vnde in multis [17] locis Vanitas ascribitur eorum intelligentie. Insuper 'Non facere bonum' [18] hoc est Deum non requirere. Quoniam etsi foris operentur bonum, non [19] tamen ex corde faciunt nec Deum per hoc requirunt, Sed potius gloriam [20] et lucrum aut saltem libertatem a pena. Ac per hoc nec faciunt, Sed potius [21] (si liceret dicere) faciunt bonum i. e. a timore Vel amore compelluntur [22] facere bonum, quod liberi non facerent. Sed ii, qui Deum requirunt, [23] faciunt gratuito et hilariter propter solum Deum, non propter aliquam [24] cuiuscunque creature possessionem, siue spiritualis siue corporalis. Sed hoc [25] non est opus Nature, sed gratie Dei."

<sup>369</sup> WA 56, 186, 1-5: "Nemo enim potest de Deo recte [2] sentire, nisi spiritus Dei sit in ipso, Sine quo false enunciat et Iudicat, [3] siue Iustitiam, siue misericordiam Dei, siue super seipsum, siue super [4] alios | enunciat |. Oportet | enim | testimonium spiritus Dei perhiberi [5] nostro spiritui."

<sup>370</sup> WA 56, 13 gloss 1; AWA 2, 174, 7-13.

<sup>371</sup> WA 55, I, 521 gloss 22; 649 gloss 17, 8-9; 886, 22-27; 886 glosses 13-15; 888, 7-11; WA 55, II, 338, 14-17; WA 56, 241, 6-25; WA 2, 564, 35 – 565, 7; WA 57, b24, 5-12; AWA 2, 177, 24 – 179, 6. See also Olsson 1971, 149-157.

<sup>372</sup> WA 5, 393, 12-27: "[12] [1. Mos. 6, 3.] Nam nec illi Gen. vi. scribuntur deum sic ignorasse, quod nihil de eo [13] scierint, cum iustitiae praeco, Noe, illis deum praedicaret, sed 'spiritus meus' [14] inquit 'non permanebit in hominibus istis in aeternum, quia carnes sunt', seu [15] ut hebraeus 'spiritus meus non iudicabit, non disceptabit cum eis, non habet [16] operationem suam in eis', quia crucifixionem carnis respuunt, ideo spiritus [17] mei iudicium non sustinent. Quibus verbis sive per Noe sive (quod magis [18] credo) per alios quoque dictis idem voluit quod hic psalmus, scilicet publice [19] arguens, eos esse carnes et sine spiritu, idest abominabiles et corruptos, non [20] facientes bonum usque ad unum, Ita hic in spiritu loquens, facie contempta, [21] et renes scrutans ac corda dicit, Nabal istum negare deum, non in ore et [22] gestu et pompa externis, ubi deum etiam prae veris dei amatoribus iactat [23] se nosse, sed in corde, idest intimo affectu, cuius caecitatem mox sequitur [24] caecitas quoque mentis, ut nec recte de deo cogitet nec loquatur nec operetur, [25] [Tit. 1, 16.] sicut ps. x. dictum est. Et Paulus Tit. i. 'dicunt, se nosse deum, factis [26] autem negant'. Hi ergo soli habent deum, qui in deum credunt fide non [27] ficta. Caeteri omnes sunt stulti et dicunt in corde suo: non est deus."



right knowledge concerning God, it follows that the fallen person will necessarily create for himself a perverted image of God. Therefore, the result of the Fall is idolatry: the creation of a false mental image and phantasm of God which the fallen person attempts to serve.<sup>373</sup> In a certain sense, for Luther the fallen, carnal person is no longer wholly a man, but rather becomes ruled by the lower parts belonging to his soul (*anima*). Thus Luther likens the life he lives to an animal life (*vita animalis*). This changed quality and direction of his life is reflected both in the operation of the cognitive capacities and of the volitional capacities of the fallen human being.

With regard to mental operation, the result of the Fall is that the human being is no longer ruled by his highest, spiritual (i.e., intellectual) part, but by the lower parts (the reason and senses). In the Fall the spirit, the noblest part, has been lost or at least submerged wholly in created things. Luther calls the resulting darkness “blindness of the original sin in intellect”.<sup>374</sup> On the one hand, the person can still be said to possess the intellect, but it has become totally sensual and occupied with phantasms.<sup>375</sup> On the other hand, it can be said that carnal people have no intellect, because they have lost the ability to grasp intellectual and spiritual things.<sup>376</sup> In a wider sense, human beings still possess

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<sup>373</sup> WA 56, 179, 11-25: “[11] Eisdem gradibus peruenitur etiam nunc ad spiritualem et subtiliorem [12] idolatriam, quæ nunc frequens est, Qua Deus colitur, non sicut est, Sed [13] sicut ab eis fingitur et estimatur. Ingratitudo enim et amor vanitatis [14] (i. e. sui sensus et propriæ Iustitiæ siue, vt dicitur, bone intentionis) vehementer [15] excecant, ita vt sint incorrigibiles nec aliter credere possint, quam [16] se eximie agere et Deo placere. Ac per hoc Deum sibi propitium formant, [17] cum non sit. Et ita phantasma suum verius colunt quam Deum [18] verum, quem similem illi phantasmati credunt. Et hinc ‘mutant eum in [19] similitudinem imaginationis suæ’ [1, 23] carnaliter sapientis et corruptibilis [20] affectus existentis. Ecce ergo quantum malum ingratitude, que [21] amorem vanitatis mox secum trahit, et hic cecitatem, hæc autem Idolatriam, [22] hæc autem vitiorum gurgitem. Econtra gratitudo conseruat [23] amorem Dei et sic manet cor in eum directum. Quare et hinc illuminatur, [24] Illuminatum vero non nisi verum Deum colit Et huic cultui adheret mox [25] omnis chorus virtutum.”

See also WA 56, 15, 1-4; 183, 6-14; WA 5, 392, 26 – 393, 27.

<sup>374</sup> WA 55, II, 903, 350-354. See also WA 55, I, 704, 21-23; 705 gloss 9; WA 56, 312, 6-10; 355, 19-26; WA 57, a89, 2-19; WA 2, 537, 25 – 538, 17.

<sup>375</sup> WA 55, II, 122, 23-24: “Et sic Cum in aliis etiam Intellectus sit [24] sensualis pene factus totus [...]”.

WA 55, II, 903, 365-367: “Vnde Qui Intellectum suum occupant tantummodo [366] cum visibilibus, Non habent suos oculos, Sed bestiarum tantummodo, [367] quæ et ipse vsque ad phantasmata vident.”

<sup>376</sup> WA 55, II, 179, 79 – 180, 105: “Et hoc vult Titulus | dicens: **Eruditio** [80] **Dauid**. Quia **intellectu** per fidem de istis docemur Et non sensu aut [81] ratione. [82] ‘Intellectus’ in scrip[turis sanctis potius ab obiecto quam potentia nomen [83] habet, contrario quam in philosophia. Est enim ‘Intellectus’ cognitio [84] vel notitia ‘sensus Christi’, de quo Apostolus 1. Corin. 1. et 2. excellenter [85] docet, quoniam ‘Sapientiam loquimur’, inquit, ‘absconditam in mysterio, [86] quam nemo principum huius sæculi cognouit.’ Et est breuiter nihil aliud [87] nisi sapientia crucis Christi, que ‘gentibus stultitia et Iudeis Scandalum est’, [88] Scil. intelligere, Quod filius Dei est incarnatus et crucifixus et mortuus et [89] suscitatus propter nostram salutem. De huius sapientie Intellectu intelligitur [90] titulus Psal[mi], quando dicit: ‘Eruditio Dauid’ vel ‘Intellectus Dauid’, [91] scil. ipsi datus. Sed quia totum hoc est in fide et non in sensu neque ratione, [92] Ideo Etiam Intellectus hominum in scrip[turis dicitur Sensualitas, [93] eo quod non nisi sensibilia capiat, quantumcunque sit subtilis et acutus et [94] prudens. Sic Apost[olus] ait ‘Prudentia carnis’ i. e. carnalis hominis, qui [95] vtique habet intellectum, in quo sit prudentia, ‘mors est’. Quare hic dicit: [96] 31, 9 **Sicut equus et mulus**, sic sunt omnes, **qui hunc intellectum non** [97] **habent**, qui est de Inuisibilibus, diuinis et celestibus, eo quod solum visibilia [98] intelligant et sentiant, quod etiam ‘equus et mulus’ facit. Intelligere [99] itaque est Spirituality et mysteria salutis et gratiæ Dei agnoscere; vnde [100] vsus loquendi obtinuit dicere mysteria redemptionis et incarnationis, eo [101] quod non nisi mysticis pateant et spiritualibus, Non autem hominibus, [102] quibus est potius stultitia, quia ipsi sunt stulti ‘equi et muli’; ideo primum [103] illos oportet mutari, vt sic mysteria, que sunt æterna, cognoscant. Qualis [104] enim quisque est, taliter Iudicat. Sed ipsi sunt ‘equi et muli’; ideo ista pro [105] nihilo Iudicant, quia non sentiunt ea.”

intellect, but one that is to such an extent bound to sensible things that only faith and grace can liberate it to see the invisible world again.<sup>377</sup> Thus the loss of the higher capacities results from the death of the spirit, and the lower parts begin to guide the life of the person. The fallen man is therefore ruled by his body and soul, senses and reason. These remaining abilities can only operate using concepts, images and phantasms derived from sensual things. Therefore, according to Luther the fallen man is “like a horse and a mule” (Ps. 32:9 [Vulg: 31:9]) who does not obey God in anything he cannot grasp.<sup>378</sup> Luther also quotes 1. Cor 2:14 in this context: “The ‘animal man’ [or ‘man with soul’ (*animalis homo*)] does not perceive those things that are of God’s spirit”. This is because after the loss of the spirit the remaining part (the soul), which assumes the role of guiding the person, can only grasp sensible and visible things, as even animals do.<sup>379</sup> Luther can also refer to the abilities of the fallen human being as “nature”, and to the capacities of the spiritual person (granted by faith) as “grace”. Compared to the light of grace (which has God as its object), and to Christ (who is the true light), the light of nature (i.e., the reason and the senses) is like darkness. It is blind to God and reaches only to created things.<sup>380</sup>

The loss of the light of faith, leads not only to the fallen person losing the knowledge of God, but also to replacing the love of God as ultimate object with love of created things, including the love of oneself.<sup>381</sup> Therefore, this turning away also has grave consequences with regard to the will: that is, for the way carnal people (in contrast to spiritual people) live and love. According to Luther, carnal people have a heavy heart and their works are burdensome, because they lack the inner help of God. They walk along winding paths like the Jewish people did in the desert, and have no direction (*directio*). Their heart is not straight ([*di*]rectus) and their spirit is not with God and filled with the solidity of the divine grace, but empty, and therefore twisted (*curvus*) and crooked (*pravus*). This means that their empty will is scattered out among the diversity of different created things, none of which satisfy the soul.<sup>382</sup> They are ruled from bottom to top, with

<sup>377</sup> This way Luther uses the term “intellect” analogically with the terms “higher reason” and “lower reason” as well as the distinction between the soul and the spirit: In the proper sense as the higher reason directed to the divine the intellect no longer exists after the Fall or at least does not work:

WA 55, I, 292, 17-25: “[31, 8] **Intellectum**<sup>6</sup> scil. spiritualium, quod fit per fidem **tibi** o homo gratis **dabo**<sup>7</sup> et **instruam** docebo per filium incarnatum **te in via hac** scil. quam docuero in Christo filio **qua gradieris: firmabo** et tunc in perpetuum et stabiliter **super te oculos meos** beneplacitum habebō super te et dirigam te in bonitate . [31, 9] **Nolite fieri** per incredulitatem spiritualium bonorum **sicut equus et mulus** vt qui solum secundum carnem sapiunt et sentiunt : **quibus non est intellectus** scil. spiritualium bonorum, Sed tantum sensus etc.”

WA 55, I, 293 gloss 6: “GLOSSA:<sup>6</sup> Ex hoc loco discē, quid sit ‘intellectus’. Quia etsi omnes homines non sint sine intellectu, tamen dicuntur hic Iudei et carnales ‘equus et mulus’ sine ‘intellectu’, Quia solum sensibilia meditantur et volunt, Non autem Inuisibilia et spiritualia.”

<sup>378</sup> WA 55, II, 257, 9-12: “Alterum Est ‘Enos’, Quod interpretatur [10] ‘obliuiscens’ seu ‘desperatus.’ Et proprie exprimit hominis rationalem naturam, [11] secundum quam corpori peccati immersus est et desperatus ac obliuiosus [12] factus.”

AWA 2, 140, 30 – 141, 32: “Hic est sicut equus et mulus, qui eo usque dominum sustinet, quousque sentit aut capit, ultra captum suum non sequitur, quia fide non vivit, sed ratione sua.”

See also WA 55, I, 520 gloss 18; WA 55, II, 179, 79-81; WA 2, 538, 15-16; WA 57, 143, 23 – b144, 12.

<sup>379</sup> WA 55, I, 631 gloss 7; WA 56, 170, 26 – 171, 8; AWA 2, 108, 6-14.

<sup>380</sup> WA 56, 356, 17 – 357, 17; WA 2, 538, 15-16; WA 57, b143, 11-22; AWA 2, 132, 4-16.

<sup>381</sup> WA 56, 356, 17 – 357, 17.

<sup>382</sup> The idea of faith directing the soul towards the future and invisible world is clearly connected with the spiritual nature of faith as the reality that gathers the soul into unity, whereas the created things divide it into plurality. WA 55, I, 220 gloss 9; 648, 19-21; 649 gloss 13; WA 55, II, 246, 191-195; 305, 124 – 306, 137;

the lower faculties of the soul and body and the sensual pleasures guiding them. They have become captured by the fleeting pleasures of the world and the winds of passion, or by seemingly rational wisdom bent on maximising earthly good. However, the true good (the lasting, invisible things and the spiritual goods) is unknown to them. Thus in this sense also they are almost like a beast or “a horse and a mule”, occupied with sensual things and living an animal life.<sup>383</sup> With regard to the will, Luther’s notion of animal life seems to be connected with the idea in Aristotelian psychology which regards the soul (*anima*) as the mover of body and the principle which makes it grow. Natural life wants to grow and collect matter in order to sustain itself, not give good to others. It will end in the death of the person, unlike the spiritual life, which is participation in the heavenly things.<sup>384</sup> Therefore Luther’s ideas about the selfish nature of the natural life and natural love seem to at least partially stem from his understanding of Aristotelian natural psychology.

In contrast to people living a carnal and animal life, spiritual people are ruled by faith, from top to bottom.<sup>385</sup> They understand the deeper significance of reality as the sign of God. Where carnal people see only phantasms and *species* of external things, the intellect of faith shows the faithful the true nature (*res*) of these things residing in God.<sup>386</sup> Thus for the faithful, visible things are not an end in themselves. The life of spiritual people is not centred on their own welfare, but rather they are spontaneously and cheerfully willing to serve God and the good of others following Christ. They are willing to do so because they participate in God’s law of love with their will, not only superficially, because their will is united with God who in his nature is the self-diffusing highest good.<sup>387</sup> He is the good of spiritual people, the good the light of faith shows and in which they participate with their will.<sup>388</sup> This spiritual good does not run dry, but rather fills the spiritual people with self-giving love, creating in them a will which seeks to spread good unto others.<sup>389</sup>

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544, 283 – 545, 310; 628, 430-445; 697, 310-315; 866, 45 – 868, 81; AWA 2, 172, 9 – 173, 14; 177, 7 – 179, 6; 261, 23 – 262, 5. The concepts of *directio* and *rectitude* appear in Gerson, according to whom they mean uniformity with the will of God. See Gerson: *Tractatus consolatorius de directione seu rectitudine cordis* (DP III pars 2, 468-479). See also Metzger 1964, 29, who analyses the concept in Anselm.

<sup>383</sup> WA 55, I, 226 gloss 22; 292, 17-25; 461 gloss 18; WA 55, II, 121, 21 – 123, 2; 204, 50-55; 588, 103-106; 619, 206 – 621, 246; WA 57, b143, 23 – 10; AWA 2, 140, 30 – 141, 32; AWA 2, 203, 3 – 204, 5; WA 5, 418, 9-32.

<sup>384</sup> See WA 55, II, 97, 1-3; 330, 34-51; WA 5, 669, 37 – 670, 34. Hägglund, Olsson and Huovinen draw the same distinction between two kinds of life, natural and spiritual. See Hägglund 1959, 71-75; Olsson 1971, 273-275; 290-294; 456-465(!); Huovinen 1981, 39-45; Raunio 2010, 34 (with reference to Huovinen). Hägglund, however, stretches the distinction too far by interpreting the two lives as the opposite affects of the person, in which sense they lose their relation to the objective corruptibility and incorruptibility of the two lives. Olsson, who near the end of his work examines the concept in the context of the tripartite anthropology gives by far the best account of the meaning of the term, but unfortunately the chapter is missing all its footnotes.

<sup>385</sup> WA 55, II, 357, 74 – 358, 96; 863, 335 – 864, 344; WA 57, b113, 20 – b114, 7; WA 2, 587, 27-35. The idea that faith or spirit rules the believer is somewhat analogical to the idea of ‘ruled sin’, see WA 57, a105, 7-19; WA 2, 562, 6-11.

<sup>386</sup> WA 55, II, 341, 94-100; 511, 138 – 512, 161; 512, 176-182; 903, 364-367. On the light of faith with regard to intellect, see chapter 3.3.2.1.

<sup>387</sup> WA 55, I, 398 gloss 8; WA 55, II, 638, 249 – 640, 285; WA 56, 234, 22 – 235, 9; 241, 15-25; 308, 4-24; WA 2, 613, 9-21; WA 57, b113, 20 – b114, 7; AWA 2, 40, 15 – 41, 15; 43, 21 – 44, 17; 48, 1 – 50, 4.

<sup>388</sup> AWA 2, 40, 14 – 41, 10; 43, 21 – 44, 16.

<sup>389</sup> WA 55, II, 80, 28 – 82, 2. See also WA 55, II, 284, 111-120; 427, 53 – 58; 637, 221-227; 997, 3069 – 998, 3093; AWA 2, 43, 21 – 44, 3. On the light of faith with regard to will, see chapter 3.3.2.2.

Carnal people, however, know nothing of this spiritual good. They are fixed on perishable and finite earthly goods. These goods are like an illusion, pleasant in appearance but internally empty (*vacuus*). Luther grants that they are in themselves good, but nevertheless only the picture and image (*species et figura*) of the ultimate end. Carnal people, however, ignorant of spiritual goods, seek these finite goods as if they were the ultimate, thus replacing the reality (*res*) with appearances (*species*). Luther states that created goods are in their nature merely limits (*termini, limites*), because they are only signs and coverings of things, whereas God and the spiritual good, their real content accessible in faith, is without beginning and end, wide and spacious. Thus carnal people will never find rest in these limited goods, but always have to seek more and more, and still receive no satisfaction.<sup>390</sup>

Luther's view of the difference between the spiritual and carnal life is therefore decidedly connected with the different natures of the divine and created good. It is exactly this distinction that also lays the foundation for Luther's view of the difference between the two loves – the light-hearted self-giving love, and the mercenary self-seeking love. One can further see behind them two different interpretations of the nature of the good: the Platonic, which emphasizes the self-diffusing nature of the good as the source of action, and the Aristotelian or Thomistic, which emphasizes the nature of the good as an end towards which creatures strive.<sup>391</sup> Luther appears to think that the natural life follows the Aristotelian model, but that the spiritual life follows the Platonic model.

#### 2.4.1.3 Spirit and Flesh as a Qualitative Distinction

The central question therefore, in Luther's two-part qualitative anthropology, is whether the person is spiritual or carnal. A spiritual person has a spirit and is therefore ruled by the love of God. A carnal person does not have a spirit and is therefore not ruled by the love of God. His heart is both 'heavy' (*grave*) and 'empty' (*vacuus*) in the manner described above. This emptiness leads to the insatiable love of vanity (i.e., a love of visible good). It is exactly this greedy desire (*cupiditas*) that according to Luther is the root (*radix*) and primary weight (*gravitas*) which sprouts forth evil and pollutes all other affects.<sup>392</sup> In the

<sup>390</sup> WA 55, I, 520 gloss 20; 676 gloss 4, 1-5; WA 55, II, 66, 25 – 68, 29; 213, 124 – 214, 151; 366, 297-304; 367, 33 – 368, 345; 949, 1650 – 950, 1682; 955, 1844 – 956, 1865; WA 56, 75, 9-15; 356, 18 – 357, 11; 372, 26 – 373, 12; WA 5, 418, 9-32. See also chapter 2.3.3.1.

<sup>391</sup> See chapter 2.2.2.

<sup>392</sup> WA 55, II, 338, 13-18: "[[[[A]liter sic: 'Cor [14] [altum]' Est cor spirituali[ter sa]piens, Quia 'spiritualis [a n]emine ludicatur', [15] et [i]n profundo Dei [absc]onditus; et in [tali] 'exaltatur Deus'. [16] [Car]nale autem cor est ['a]ltum', Sed vanum [sine] spiritu, i. e. in illo [17] [non] 'exaltatur Deus', [Sed] p[ro]ptius ipsemet. Iob 5.: 'Vir va[nus] in superbiam [18] eri[git]ur.'"]]

WA 55, II, 66, 15 – 67, 14: "Et 'Graue' cor dicitur, quod subiaceat iniustitie cuicunque. [16] Et tota iniustitia vocatur hic 'grauitas cordis'. Que tamen potest diuidi [17] per singulas suas species, procedendo ex radice, vt Cupiditas est radix [18] et prima 'gravitas', ex qua pullulat ira, Inuidia, superbia, malitia, dolus [19] et omnia fere opera carnis, que apostolus Gal. 5. enumerat. Quodlibet [20] autem eorum est 'grauitas cordis' et infert suam 'vanitatem' et 'mendacium', [21] sicut dicemus. Econtra leue Cor est Cor Iustitie totius cum [22] omnibus suis partibus, de quo in primo versu dictum est. Et recte Sane [23] dixit 'Cor graue', non corpore aut manu aut carne aut sensu, quia in [24] hiis sunt nimis leues. Qua autem ratione Iniustitia dicatur grauitas, [25] satis patet. Quia non sinit eleuari in Deum, Quia deicit Spiritum sub [26] se indignioribus, ipsum meliorem. Stante ergo ista 'grauitate Cordis' [27] sequitur necessario, Quod diligant

qualitative sense, according to Luther, the distinction between the spiritual and carnal person is based on the nature of this basic affect. The basic affect of a person is either self-giving love, which comes from faith and leads the person to freely and cheerfully serve God and other people, or greedy and self-seeking love, which comes from the emptiness of the heart. The former is satisfied by the spiritual goods grasped in faith, the latter seeks sensual pleasure or serves God and other people only coercibly, from fear of punishment or desire to attain merit.<sup>393</sup> Thus it can be said in general, that for Luther the entire carnal person ruled by the evil affect can be called “flesh” and carnal, and the entire spiritual person “spirit” and spiritual.<sup>394</sup>

However, as noted above, Luther’s anthropology undergoes development during the period under consideration.<sup>395</sup> This is the case especially with the *Dictata*, which is dominated by the flesh – spirit distinction. At the same time the concepts of flesh and spirit are used in such a way that their qualitative sense and their use in designating a part of the person cannot usually be distinguished from each other. In the *Dictata* Luther uses expressions such as “You have flesh and you are in flesh” (*caro est tibi et in carne es*) or “Spirit and flesh are one human being” (*spiritus et caro unus homo est*),<sup>396</sup> which anticipate the *simul* anthropology he arrives at in the *Lectures on Romans*. But these concepts are nevertheless still strongly related to the flesh and the spirit as ‘parts’ of the person, which derive their affects from their object, so that the term “flesh” retains its connection with corporeality. Thus the *Dictata* expresses in the strongest manner of Luther’s writings the link between the invisible, infinite spiritual goods and the love of the spirit associated with them, as well as the visible, finite carnal goods and the love of the flesh associated with them, although this theme continues through all Luther’s writings under consideration in the present study.

In the *Lectures on Romans* the concepts of *simul* and *sapientia carnis* come to the fore. For example, Luther states in the *Lectures* that “the same man is spirit and flesh, but flesh is his sickness or wound, and insofar he loves the Law of God he is Spirit, insofar he has evil desire he is the sickness of the spirit and wound of sin, which has begun to heal”.<sup>397</sup> Nevertheless, Luther uses the terms flesh and spirit primarily with reference to the external and internal man, and only in a few places does it appear that the terms are used to refer to the affect only.<sup>398</sup> It is not until the *Lectures on Galatians* that Luther clearly defines that the term ‘flesh’ can, aside from the part, mean *only* the affect ruling the person. This

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‘vanitatem’. Quia enim veritatem et [28] Iustitiam non habent, et cor sine amore esse nequit, ideo necessarium [1] est, vt Deum non diligant, Sed ‘vanitatem’ (i. e. bonum tantum apparens) [...] Omne enim quod homini seruit et vtile est sine fructu et salute spiritus, [12] vanitas est secundum Eccles[i]asten. Quia Spiritus est maior et dignior [13] pars hominis, eterna et immortalis, cuius bona sunt vera et eterna, [14] Caro autem vilis et fluxa sicut fenum, quod cito exiccatur.”

<sup>393</sup> WA 55, II, 638, 249 – 640, 285; WA 56, 8 gloss 4; WA 2, 500, 17-35; AWA 2, 40, 3 – 41, 10; 44, 7-16; 48, 1- 49, 19.

<sup>394</sup> A similar idea is expressed by Olsson 1971, 460-462.

<sup>395</sup> On this development of the bipartite flesh – spirit distinction as concerning the whole man, see also Joest 1967, 197-202.

<sup>396</sup> WA 55, II, 972, 2321 – 973, 2348.

<sup>397</sup> WA 56, 350, 27 – 351, 1: “Sic idem homo simul est spiritus et caro. Sed Caro est eius infirmitas seu [28] vulnus, Et inquantum diligit legem Dei, Spiritus est; inquantum autem [1] concupiscit, est infirmitas spiritus et vulnus peccati, quod sanari incipit.”

<sup>398</sup> See e.g. WA 56, 69, 17 – 70, 20; 73, 3-11; 75 gloss 2; 258, 9-16; 345, 29 – 346, 1 vs. WA 56, 343, 8 – 344, 22; 350, 22 – 351, 2.

development results in the formation of the two distinct, interpenetrating anthropologies (the natural and the qualitative) as illustrated by the above passage from the *Commentary on the Magnificat*. Luther now begins to emphasize the latter, qualitative point according to which the “spirit” and “flesh” refer not to any particular part of the human being, but rather to the entire person and everything he does, which flow forth from the basic affect. Thus Luther states in the *Lectures* that “‘flesh’ is not only the sensual man or sensuality with its desires etc. but everything which is outside the grace of Christ ... Therefore all righteousness and wisdom outside grace is ‘flesh’ and carnal.”<sup>399</sup> This innovation in interpretation is confirmed and expanded upon in the *Commentary on Galatians*, a work containing a great deal of anthropological discussion and which occupies an important place in the refinement of Luther’s anthropology.<sup>400</sup> There Luther explains that the same deed can be spiritual or carnal – carnal, if forced by the letter of the Law; spiritual, if proceeding from the spiritual Law, which presupposes faith.<sup>401</sup> Flesh thus denotes not only sensuality or desires of the flesh, but everything, which lies outside of grace and the spirit of Christ. Correspondingly, everything external proceeding from the faith of the spirit can be called spiritual.<sup>402</sup> Luther further makes it clear near the end of the *Commentary* (while commenting Gal 6:19-21) that the fact that the quality of a thing is determined by the basic affect concerns the whole man, and not only his works:

Here it is most manifestly seen that ‘flesh’ is not used only for the lustful desires, but before all else especially for those which are against the spirit of grace. Heresies, sects and disagreements are namely vices of subtle minds and of those who shine with an appearance of holiness. Therefore I will say to confirm that which I have said before: flesh signifies

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<sup>399</sup> WA 57, a77, 18-25: “[18] Hic manifestissime patet, quod ‘caro’ non est tantum sensualis homo [19] seu sensualitas cum suis concupiscentiis etc., sed omnino, quicquid est [20] extra gratiam Christi. Nam certum est, quod Galatas ideo dicit carne [21] consumari, non quia luxurias vel crapulas sectarentur, sed quia opera [22] et iusticiam legis querebant. Igitur omnis iusticia et sapiencia extra [23] gratiam caro et carnalis est, ut Heb. 9.: ‘in variis baptismatibus et [24] iusticiis carnis’. Sic et Gen. 6.: ‘Non permanebit spiritus meus in homine [25] in eternum’; non ait: quia carnem habet, sed ‘quia caro est’.”

<sup>400</sup> See e.g. WA 2, 500, 17-34; 509, 20 – 510, 5; 585, 8-30; 588, 21 – 589, 13 with note on Luther’s critical comments regarding Aristotle, Jerome and Origen.

<sup>401</sup> WA 2, 500, 17-35.

<sup>402</sup> WA 2, 509, 20-38: “[20] Observa: carne consummari dicit, hoc est finire, desinere, deficere. [21] Ex quo loco claret, carnem non modo pro sensualitate seu concupiscentiis [22] carnis accipi, sed pro omni eo, quod extra gratiam et spiritum Christi est. [23] Nam certum est, Galatas non ideo consummari carne, quod luxurias, libidines [24] aut quibuscunque moribus carnem sequerentur, sed quod opera legis et iusticiam [25] relicta fide quaererent. At iusticia et opera legis non sunt tantum res [26] sensuales, cum huc etiam pertineat opinio et fiducia, quae in corde sunt. [27] [Hebr. 9, 10.] Quicquid igitur ex fide non est, caro est, Heb. ix. In variis iusticiis et baptismatibus [28] [1. Mos. 6, 3.] carnis. Sic Gen. vi. Non permanebit spiritus meus in homine, quia [29] [Röm. 7, 18.] caro est. Non ait ‘quia carnem habet’ sed ‘quia caro est’. Et Rho. vij. [30] Non inveno in me, hoc est in carne mea, bonum. Idem ergo ipsemet et [31] [1. Cor. 15, 50] caro sua, quantum est ex Adam. Sic iterum: Caro et sanguis regnum dei [32] [Matth. 16, 47.] non possidebunt, et Matth. xvi. Caro et sanguis non revelavit tibi. Sed et [33] i. Corin. iij. adhuc, inquit, carnales estis, homines estis, cum tamen de Apostolorum [34] [1. Cor. 3, 3.] nominibus certarent. Quibus fit, ut omnis omnium hominum, philosophorum, [35] oratorum, etiam pontificum doctrina et iusticia carnalis sit, ubi [36] non fidem docent, et satis abusive sacros Canones dici, qui de dignitatibus [37] et opibus statuunt, intelliges, si hic Apostolum audias. Rursum, nihil tam [38] carnale est et externum, quin, si operatore fidei spiritu fiat, spirituale sit.”

See also Vind 2010, 23-24. Unlike Vind states, however, Luther does not move away from the trichotomy, but introduces a second, qualitative dichotomy (which Vind calls “theological”) alongside the trichotomy.

the whole man, and spirit also the whole man. The internal man and external man, or new and old man, are not distinguished by a difference between the soul and the body, but by the affect. And while the fruits or works of the spirit are peace, faith, continence etc. and these take place in the body, who could deny that the spirit and its fruits are present in our carnal body and members, as is clearly said in 1. Cor. 6, which asks: Do you not know that your members are temples of the Holy Spirit? Therefore not only the soul but also the members are a spiritual temple. And again: Glorify and bear God in your body, not: “in your soul”. But on the other hand, when envy and enmity are vices of souls, who would deny that the flesh is in the soul? Therefore, the spiritual man is the whole man when he minds (*sapit*) those things which are God’s, carnal man the whole man when he minds those things which are his own.<sup>403</sup>

However, one should note that what takes place is more a shift of focus than a change per se. Whereas in the *Dictata* the relationship between the visible and invisible was the central theme, the theology of love (i.e., the question of the quality of the basic affect of the person) assumes a more prominent place in the latter works. Being spiritual is no longer defined first and foremost in relation to the invisible world, but more in terms of the nature of the love that rules the person. The same is true in the *Operationes in Psalmos*.<sup>404</sup> Nevertheless, the nature of love still retains its dependence on faith and the invisible goods known through it.<sup>405</sup> Furthermore, as is clear from the passage of the *Commentary on the Magnificat* of 1521, the tripartite natural anthropology persists alongside the bipartite qualitative anthropology even after the development of the latter anthropology, so that neither one is merged into the other. Rather, the person is defined through them from different aspects, so that Luther can use both simultaneously. Both are related to each other.<sup>406</sup>

Therefore one can say, that the entire man is carnal or ‘flesh’ when his affect is carnal and he minds and seeks (*sapit*) those things which are his own. The entire man is spiritual or ‘spirit’ when his affect is spiritual and he minds and seeks (*sapit*) those things which are of God. The carnal man and the spiritual man possess the same lower parts of soul and body, and their respective capacities of reason and senses. The difference between the two depends on the spirit, which in the carnal person is dead or submerged in sensual things. Therefore, his love, will or affect has turned towards those things. From this fixation

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<sup>403</sup> WA 2, 588, 26 – 589, 3: “[26] Hic omnium manifestissime patet, carnem non pro libidinis accipi [27] tantum concupiscentiis, sed pro omni prorsus eo, quod contrarium est spiritui [28] gratiae. Nam haereses seu sectae et dissensiones sunt vitia subtilissimarum [29] mentium et sanctissima specie fulgentium. Quod ideo dico, ut stabiliam quae [30] supra dixi, per carnem totum hominem significari, per spiritum aequale totum, [31] atque hominem interiorem et exteriorem seu novum et veterem non distingui [32] [Gal. 5, 22.] iuxta differentiam animae et corporis, sed iuxta affectus. Nam cum fructus [33] seu opera spiritus sint pax, fides, continentia &c. et haec in corpore fiant, [34] quis potest negare spiritum et fructum eius in corpore membrisque carnalibus [35] [1. Cor. 6, 15., 3, 16.] esse, sicut expresse i. Cor. vi. An nescitis, inquit, quod membra vestra templum [36] sunt spiritus sancti? Ecce non tantum anima, sed membra quoque sunt [37] [1. Cor. 6, 20.] spirituale templum. Et iterum: glorificate et portate deum in corpore vestro, [38] non dicit ‘in anima vestra’. Contra, quando invidiae, inimicitiae vitia sunt [1] animorum, quis negabit, carnem esse in anima? Igitur spiritualis homo totus [2] homo est, quantum sapit quae dei sunt, carnalis totus, quantum sapit quae [3] sua sunt.”

<sup>404</sup> See e.g. WA 5, 564, 35 – 565, 13.

<sup>405</sup> See e.g. AWA 2, 40, 14 – 41, 10; 43, 21 – 44, 17.

<sup>406</sup> WA 7, 550, 19 – 552, 4. See also WA 2, 585, 31-33.

follows the greedy love (*cupiditas*) that rules the carnal life, and makes the whole person ‘flesh’ and carnal. The spiritual person, on the contrary, has a living spirit, and participates through faith in the spiritual and eternal things. These things satisfy his will with their abundance, and create in him a self-giving and self-sacrificing love (*caritas*) that wishes to give good to others. This basic affect penetrates all the actions of the person and takes the natural parts into its use. In this sense, the entire man is either flesh when ruled by the carnal affect, or spirit when ruled by the spiritual affect. The relationship of the parts to the whole as portrayed in the *Commentary on the Magnificat* is illustrated in the following table, in which the carnal man is compared to the spiritual man. The affect is connected in the table to the spiritual part, as it stems from the quality of the spirit:

	<b>Carnal man (‘Flesh’)</b>	<b>Spiritual man (‘Spirit’)</b>
<b>Spirit</b> Capacity Object: Affect	(dead) blindness of original sin in intellect created visible finite goods greedy love ( <i>cupiditas</i> )	(ruling) intellect of faith  divine invisible infinite goods self-giving love ( <i>caritas</i> )
<b>Soul</b> Capacity Object	reason species, phantasms, concepts etc.	reason species, phantasms, concepts etc.
<b>Body</b> Capacity Object	senses visible and sensible things	senses visible and sensible things

However, a reservation needs to be given concerning that for Luther the spiritual man exists only as an ideal case. Whereas the human beings after the Fall are for Luther purely and simply carnal, having lost the gift of original righteousness, the only purely spiritual people are those who have departed this life. They no longer have flesh, but are wholly spirit, having a spiritual body like Christ. The faithful on this Earth, on the other hand, are in the process of being sanctified. In this respect, they are only partially, or at the same time, spiritual and carnal. Thus to understand Luther’s view of the human condition it is not enough to examine the tripartite and bipartite anthropologies alone. One must also examine the struggle which takes place within the person of the faithful. Luther understands this struggle in very concrete, Pauline terms as a conflict between two “natures” in the same person.<sup>407</sup> The struggle begins at the infusion of faith, which is the topic of the next chapter.

<sup>407</sup> WA 55, I, 916 gloss 5; WA 55, II, 122, 23-27; 882, 55-69; 911, 609 – 912, 632; 972, 2321 – 973, 2348; WA 56, 343, 8 – 344, 22; WA 57, a102, 6-18; WA 2, 585, 31 – 586, 22; 586, 37-38; WA 5, 669, 37 – 670, 34.



## 2.4.2. The Christian

### 2.4.2.1 *The Infusion of Faith – the Creation of the Spirit*

Luther establishes in several places, that the precise hallmark of the carnal person is being at internal peace. The carnal person is blind, evil and submerged in external things up to the point that he cannot discern the evil that is in him. Rather, he co-operates willingly and is at unity with his evil desire (concupiscence), and therefore there exists no internal struggle in him.<sup>408</sup> At the most, if he knows the law of God externally, he can try to fulfil it with his deeds, but because his will is united with the desire of the flesh and the law only affects him externally.<sup>409</sup> With all his capacities (which discern only created things) and all his will (which loves only himself and created goods) he stands against the grace of God.<sup>410</sup> Furthermore, Luther's idea of God as incomprehensible and hidden under his opposites (visible and external evils) makes God unapproachable for the carnal person.<sup>411</sup> This unapproachability is often illustrated by Luther with the image of a cloud, in the middle of which God is hidden. This cloud has both the meaning of incomprehensibility and hiddenness, but for the flesh it signifies above all the hiddenness under the external letter and the sufferings, which cover the presence and action of God in the Law and in Christ.<sup>412</sup> Because of this covering, carnal people will find no pleasure in the word of God, and will flee from it. Luther describes this aversion in the following way:

‘Now’ I say, after Christ has been made the King of everything, there are two things which hinder you most so that you do not think/know right (*ne recta cognoscatis*).

First, that this Christ – who was crucified, killed and condemned by you, and on God's authority was even cursed according to the Law of Moses – is proclaimed the Lord of Lords. It will be most difficult of all to recognize as a King one who died such a desperate and shameful death. The senses oppose fiercely, reason is horrified, experience denies it, there is no precedent. This will be complete foolishness to the Gentiles and a stumbling block to the Jews, unless you raise the mind over all this.

Second, that this king reigns in a manner that he teaches that all in which you hoped for in the law should be condemned and all which you feared be loved. He sets before you the Cross and death. He urges that visible good and evil should be despised and a far different good, ‘which the eye has not seen nor the ear has heard’ be conferred to you. You must die, if you wish to live under this king. [...]

How will anyone endure this, who leans on the senses, measures things with reason and ‘stands on the doorway of his tent’; who is unable to look at the face of Moses? Therefore intellect (*intellectus*) and education are necessary, through which you will transcend these

<sup>408</sup> WA 55, II, 882, 55-69; WA 56, 342, 30 – 343, 28; 345, 20-28; WA 57, a89, 2-19; WA 2, 537, 35 – 538, 17; WA 5, 479, 12-15. This simplicity is also the reason why Luther thinks that a human being cannot co-operate in the birth of faith, but that when he has become spiritual (and thus is partly flesh, partly spirit), then he can co-operate with grace. See e.g., WA 56, 379, 1-17.

<sup>409</sup> WA 55, II, 639, 257-268; WA 56, 235, 4-9; 308, 4-13; AWA 2, 40, 3 – 41, 10; 44, 8-15; WA 2, 492, 36 – 493, 2.

<sup>410</sup> WA 56, 76 gloss 1; 170, 26 – 171, 8; 356, 17 – 357, 17.

<sup>411</sup> See chapter 2.2.4.

<sup>412</sup> WA 55, I, 136, 12 – 138, 1; 136 gloss 1; 609 gloss 19; 650 gloss 1; WA 55, II, 136, 8-13; WA 5, 503, 4-34; 506, 26 – 507, 15. On other meanings of the cloud, see WA 55, II, 139, 3 – 140, 19.

and, despising the visible, be elevated to the invisible; not minding those which are upon earth, but those which are above, where Christ is, etc. [...]

This intellect is not that of which the philosophers opine, but it is faith itself which can see both in prosperous and adverse things that which is not visible. Therefore, not saying what it is that should be understood, he says in an absolute way: *Understand*, that is, make it so, that you would be intelligent, take care, that you would be believing. For that which faith understands has no name or form (*speciem*). Prosperity or adversity in present things completely subverts everyone who does not understand the invisible by faith. For this intellect comes from faith, according to this: 'If you will not believe, you will not understand', and it is entrance into that cloud in which everything that the human senses, reason, mind or intellect can comprehend is overwhelmed. For faith unites the soul with the invisible, ineffable, innominable, eternal, incogitable Word of God and at the same time separates it from all that is visible. This is the Cross and 'passover' of the Lord, in which he predicates this necessary intellect.<sup>413</sup>

One can distinguish in the text both aspects of God's unapproachability: hiddenness under contraries (shame of the cross, etc.), and incomprehensibility (i.e., that the theological good is far different than all visible goods, invisible and heavenly). The text also juxtaposes the senses, reason and visible things (on which the carnal person is dependent) to the intellectual and invisible things of faith. Therefore, it is natural, that Luther describes the action of God in the birth of faith as something that causes suffering for the carnal person. One of the images Luther takes from the Bible to demonstrate this effect is the portrayal of the Word of God as a wand or a sceptre with which the carnal person is struck. The impact of the word is painful and crushing for the flesh. It reduces the carnal person to nothing and brings him to that darkness (i.e., the hiddenness of God

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<sup>413</sup> AWA 2, 106, 18 – 108, 5: "Nunc", inquam, postquam Christus constitutus est rex omnium <v 6>; in quo tempore duo sunt, quae vos maxime remorabuntur, ne recta cognoscatis.

Primum, quod Christus ille a vobis crucifixus, mortuus, damnatus, etiam auctore deo maledictus secundum legem Mosi, praedicatur dominus dominantium <1Tim 6,15b; Apc 19,16>. Difficillimum omnium erit agnoscere eum regem, qui tam desperata et ignominiosa morte interit. Sensus fortiter repugnat, ratio abhorret, usus negat, exemplum deest, plane stultitia haec gentibus et Iudaeis scandalum erit <1Cor 1,23>, nisi super haec omnia mentem elevaveritis.

Secundum, quod rex iste sic regnat, ut omnia, quae in lege sperastis, contemnenda, omnia, quae timuistis, amanda doceat; crucem mortemque proponit; bona, quae videntur, et mala iuxta vilipendenda esse suadet, longe in alia vos bona eaque, "quae nec oculus vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascenderunt" <1Cor 2,9>, vos transpositurus. Moriendum est vobis, si sub hoc rege vivere vultis; crux et odium totius mundi feranda, ignominia, pauperitas, fames, sitis, breviter: mala omnium fluctuum mundi non fugienda. Hic est enim rex, qui et ipse stultus factus est mundo et mortuus, deinde conterit suos virga ferrea et tamquam vas figuli confringit eos <v 9>.

Quomodo hunc sustinebit, qui sensu nititur, qui rem ratione metitur, qui stat 'in ostio papilionis sui' <Ex 33,8>, qui faciem sui Mosi videre nequit? Ideo intellectu opus est et eruditione, quibus haec transcendatis et visibilibus contemptis in invisibilia rapiamini non sapientes ea, quae super terram, sed quae sursum sunt, ubi Christus est etc <Col 3,1s>. [...]

Non enim habent nomen nequem speciem ea, qua fides intelligit. Nam praesentium rerum prosperitas vel adversitas penitus subvertit omnem hominem, qui fide non intelligit invisibilia. Hic enim intellectus ex fide venit, iuxta illud <Is 7,9>: 'Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis', et est ingressus ille caliginis, in qua absorbetur, quicquid sensus, ratio, mens intellectusque hominis comprehendere potest. Coniungit enim fides animam cum invisibili, ineffabili, innominabili, aeterno, incogitabili verbo dei simulque separat ab omnibus visibilibus, et haec est crux et 'phase' domini, in quo necessarium praedicat hunc intellectum."

under external things) where Christ is present.<sup>414</sup> Luther combines this image with the description of the external word as a vehicle of Christ with which Christ, the Truth, enters the soul and subjects the flesh to his rule.<sup>415</sup> Another common image Luther uses to speak about the birth of faith is that of *infusion*: i.e., the infusion of faith or grace, related to the medieval concept of infused virtues. The work of grace in the infusion and growth of these virtues leads the person into darkness and suffering, in the midst of which Christ is embraced.<sup>416</sup>

Both images are connected with Luther's understanding of the sacramental nature of the Church. Luther holds that in the Church the invisible things are present, but concealed by the veil of Christ's humanity, the external word and the sacraments. Grace draws the human being through that veil.<sup>417</sup> The images also follow Luther's distinction between the alien and proper work of God. The alien work, the crushing, judgement and pain which meets the carnal person, is necessary for the proper work of God (in infusing faith, drawing into the midst of the cloud or through the veil, and uniting with Christ, who is present under the alien work) to be actualized and complemented. The significance of the crushing work is not understood until the saving work has taken place.<sup>418</sup> This is because the form of the flesh and the light of the natural reason completely contradict the light of faith and do not recognize the presence of God. Therefore, it is necessary that the flesh, the natural reason and the prudence of the flesh are brought to darkness and nothingness through the annihilating action of the Word and grace.<sup>419</sup> Thus both of the ways Luther uses to illustrate the work of God in the creation of faith are united in that they both contain the idea of bringing the subject into darkness and cloud. The external form of the word and the sacraments, as well as the passions, are the dark cloud in which God is

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<sup>414</sup> WA 55, II, 848, 214-224; WA 57, b109, 2-23; b143, 7 – b144, 12; AWA 2, 96, 12 – 103, 22; 107, 3-8; 109, 16 – 27. On the concepts of *annihilatio* and nothing in Luther's theology see also Juntunen 1996.

<sup>415</sup> WA 55, II, 328, 506-511; 847, 187 – 848, 203. Note that when Luther speaks of the dual effect of the Word of God, it is sometimes very difficult to maintain a grammatical distinction between the (external) word (in lower case) and the (internal) Word, i.e. Christ (with capital letter). The external word contains the effective internal Word, but also the exterior form of the external word is involved in the effect the preached Word of God has on a person: the external word hides the proper content of the Word of God, the internal Word, under a lowly form displeasing to the flesh. The external word is also necessary, for the function of the Word of God, as following the incarnational principle it is the vehicle with which a material person can in the first place be touched by God. Because of this problem, when speaking of the effect of both the external and internal word combined, the lower case wording will be preferred.

<sup>416</sup> The infusion of grace and the theological virtues is dealt with in length in the excursus entitled *De spe et passionibus*, AWA 2, 283-321. See also WA 56, 379, 1-17; WA 57, b79 gloss 3. On Luther's concept of infused faith in general, see Huovinen 1997 and chapter 3.5.1 as well as Schwarz 1962, 40-42.

<sup>417</sup> Chapter 2.3.3.3. See also WA 55, II, 328, 506-511. Notwithstanding the emphasis on the sacraments Luther recognizes that God also uses the sufferings of life to draw the human being to him, or at least to test and strengthen faith. See AWA 2, 363, 6-18. There are also a few places in the latter writings (*Lectures on Galatians* and *Commentary on Galatians*) where Luther speaks about the sweetness of grace and the intuition of the passion of Christ drawing people to God. However, it seems that these texts should be interpreted as speaking about the dual effect of the word (both sweet and harsh), so that it is not disputed that the effect of the word is harsh with regard to the flesh, as the perception of the sweetness of grace is linked to faith. See WA 57, a102, 19 – a103, 9. See also WA 2, 587, 27 – 588, 20.

<sup>418</sup> WA 55, I, 382 gloss 10; WA 55, II, 725, 35 – 726, 77; 926, 1039 – 932, 1182; WA 56, 375, 1 – 379, 17; WA 57, b79 gloss 3; AWA 2, 97, 12 – 98, 8; WA 5, 503, 24-34. See also the analysis of tribulations in chapter 3.5.2.

<sup>419</sup> WA 55, II, 722, 134-142; WA 57, b143, 7-15. The form of the flesh must be annihilated so that the form of Christ may be born in the believer. WA 56, 62 gloss 1; 329, 27 – 330, 5; WA 2, 548, 20-29.

hidden and in the midst of which Christ as the internal and uncreated Word is encountered.<sup>420</sup> Even though the carnal person wants to avoid this cloud, he is drawn into it by God's grace, at first against his will. However, when he is smitten by the sceptre of the word of God, grace effects the theological virtues of faith, hope and love which connect the person with "the pure and internal Word" that is Christ. Luther describes this infusion of grace using mystical terms such as "descending to the darkness" and entering the "wine cellar" (Song of Songs 2:4). In these passions connected to the infusion the human being is 'pulled away' from self-centeredness and will begin to rely on God instead of his or her own abilities.<sup>421</sup>

The passage of Christ into the human heart by the means of the external word, infused grace and sufferings results in the creation of a new man. Luther stresses that justification is not about sin being taken away and the same old man remaining, but rather it is about the old man being taken away and sin remaining. That is; grace and spiritual righteousness destroys and exchanges (*tollit et mutat*) the person, carries him away from sin as it justifies the spirit, although sin still remains in the flesh.<sup>422</sup> What takes place is an ontological change: the old, carnal man and flesh are vain and temporal and are incapable of receiving spiritual grace.<sup>423</sup> In the creation of faith, the carnal person is given a new

<sup>420</sup> AWA 2, 97, 13 - 98, 8; 131, 23 - 132, 16.

<sup>421</sup> WA 57, b143, 7 - b144, 12; AWA 2, 107, 9 - 108, 5; 317, 7 - 319, 3.

<sup>422</sup> WA 56, 334, 13 335, 4: "Corollarium.[14] Modus loquendi Apostoli et modus methaphysicus seu moralis sunt [15] contrarii. Quia Apostolus loquitur, vt significet | sonet | hominem potius [16] auferri peccato remanente | velut relicto | et hominem expurgari a [17] peccato | potius quam econtra |. Humanus autem sensus econtra peccatum [18] auferri homine manente et hominem potius purgari loquitur. [19] Sed Apostoli sensus optime proprius et perfecte diuinus est. Sic enim et [20] Scriptura psalmo 80.: 'Diuertit ab oneribus dorsum eius.' Non ait: [21] diuertit onera a dorso eius. || Sic supra 6.: 'in qua traditi estis.' || Et [22] figura exodi, quia non abstulit Egyptios a filiis Israel, Sed eduxit Israel [23] ex Egypto remanente. Et psalmo 16.: 'De reliquiis tuis preparabis [24] vultum eorum, quia pones eos dorsum.' Et ratio huius locutionis: Quia [25] gratia et spiritualis Iustitia ipsum hominem tollit et mutat et a peccatis [26] auertit, licet peccatum relinquat, Vt dum Iustificat spiritum, reliquit [27] concupiscentiam in carne | et in medio peccatorum in mundo |. || Et [28] iste modus Validissima machina est contra Iustitios. || Iustitia Vero [1] humana studet tollere et mutare peccata primum et conseruare ipsum [2] hominem; ideo non est Iustitia, Sed hipocrisis. Ergo donec homo [3] ipse viuut et non tollitur ac mutatur per renouationem gratie, Nullis [4] operibus potest facere, Vt sub peccato et lege non sit."

WA 57, b109, 2-19: "Dicitur autem 'virga equitatis', id est rectitudinis [3] seu, quod idem est, 'direccionis eque' Hebreo ideomate, quod Latine [4] diceretur virga equa, recta, directa etc., sicut ps. 20.: 'in benedictionibus [5] dulcedinis', quod Latine diceremus 'in benedictionibus dulcibus'. Igitur [6] ad differentiam omnium aliorum regnorum, eciam Sinagoge, licet legem [7] Dei habuerit, dicitur 'virga regni tui' non sicut aliorum regnorum, [8] quorum virge sunt curvatis seu iniquitatis, tui autem solius 'virga [9] rectitudinis', quia nulla prorsus doctrina sive civilis sive canonica sive [10] philosophica et quocunque modo humana potest hominem dirigere et [11] rectum facere, siquidem eo usque tantummodo ducit, ut homine servato [12] in vetustate bonis instituat moribus. Et ita necessario facit non nisi [13] simulatores et hipocritas, quia remanet illa fex cordis et sentina veteris [14] hominis, scil. amor sui ipsius; ideo merito est doctrina iniquitatis, cum [15] rectitudinem prestare non possit. Evangelium vero dicit: 'Nisi quis [16] D Bl. 24 a renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu\* denuo, non potest intrare regnum [17] celorum', ac sic nihil reservat veteris hominis, sed totum destruit et [18] facit novum usque ad odium sui eradicans penitus amorem sui per fidem [19] Christi."

<sup>423</sup> WA 55, I, 680, 3-22: "[102, 13] **Quomodo miseretur** quia 'castigat' et erudit<sup>17</sup> **pater filiorum** quos tamen 'diligat' et heredes facit **miserus est dominus timentibus se** castigans eos hic, vt in futurum heredes habeat: [102, 14] **quoniam ipse cognouit** 4, 165 quod carnalis homo non <sup>1</sup> cognoscit, Sed spirituales ipse cognoscere facit **figmentum nostrum** corpus nostrum de terra plasmatum est, quia vana querit et non solida ideo ipsum castigat<sup>18</sup>. **Recordatus est quoniam pulvis sumus** ideo non in illum 'suam misericordiam corroborat' / [102, 15] **homo** in quantum homo et nondum filius Dei **sicut foenum** quare non est capax

spiritual nature from Christ. In and of himself he is flesh, visible and mortal. But from Christ, by having become a faithful Christian, he is holy in his spirit. With regard to the new nature given in Christ he is spiritual, immortal and invisible, and begins to participate in a new, heavenly life. Thus what happens is a kind of miraculous exchange analogous to the Incarnation. The Christian acquires a new spiritual nature from Christ, in whom he participates.<sup>424</sup> This new, spiritual nature constitutes in him a “new being” (*novum esse*), which is in discontinuity with and in conflict with his old being. Thus, the human person cannot cooperate in the infusion of faith. He can only cooperate with grace after grace has become the new reality in him.<sup>425</sup> Luther explains this change in the *Lectures on Romans* using even Aristotelian metaphysical terms. The existence of the old man is non-being (*non esse*); justification is becoming (*feri*), and righteousness is being (*esse*). In the new birth, the Christian crosses over from non-being through becoming to new being; from sin through justification to new life. For this reason Luther places annihilation at the beginning of the process of justification. As long as the human being presumes to be something in himself, he cannot receive the new form from Christ. Thus grace destroys the

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eternę misericordię<sup>19</sup>: **dies** i. e. prosperitas et gloria secundum carnem **eius tanquam flos agri sic efflorescit** transeunter, ideo secundum aliud est ei providenda misericordia quam secundum carnem per mortem corporis. [102, 16] **Quoniam spiritus** anima corporis vita et motrix **pertransibit** in morte **in illo** homine **et** supple: ipse homo **non subsistet** permanebit in hac vita semper<sup>20</sup>: **et** supple: homo **non cognoscet** quia obliuiscetur nec reuertetur **amplius locum suum** Vitam et habitationem in hoc mundo. [102, 17] **Misericordia autem domini** gratia autem non huiusmodi est, Ergo non in hac Vita Sed **ab aeterno** quia ‘ante constitutionem mundi nos elegit’ ad istam misericordiam, Eph. 1. **et usque in aeternum: super timentes eum** ergo et ipsos eternos et non temporales esse oportebit, alioquin non erunt eius capaces.”

See also WA 55, I, 681 glosses 18, 19, 20 and 21.

<sup>424</sup> WA 55, I, 684, 1-4: “**Qui facis angelos tuos** vt sint nuncii tui missi ad homines, Heb. 1. **spiritus** spirituales naturas : **et ministros tuos** eosdem, vt sint ministri tui **ignem** spirituale naturam **vrentem** quia alios accendunt”

WA 55, I, 684 gloss 5: “GLOSSA:<sup>5</sup> [1]Potest autem etiam sic intelligi vt Iacet: Qui facis eos qui sunt [2]angeli tui, vt sint ‘spiritus’, i. e. spirituales, agiles, mobiles et non sicut [3]homo qui facit suos nuntios tardos, carneos etc. Et eosdem Ministros [4]facis ‘ignem vrentem’, i. e. Efficaces ad exequendum. Vnde et angeli [5]semper in luce et igne apparuisse leguntur. Sed propheticę loquendo et [6]magis ad propositum Sensus est: O Christe, ‘Angeli’ tui, qui sunt Apostoli [7]et eorum successores, sunt ‘spiritus’, i. e. spirituales, quia spiritum et non [8]literam predicant Et non sunt caro, sicut Angeli Mosi et regum terre sunt [9]caro, Quia nunciant tantummodo carnalia. Sed tui sunt Inuisibiles, quia [10]spiritus, inquantum sunt nuncii tui et angeli tui. Vnde in quolibet [11]Christiano, maxime prelato, duo sunt considerata: primum, quod est ex [12]seipso secundum carnem visibilis, mortalis etc. Alterum, quod est ex [13]Christo, i. e. scil. fidelis Christianus, sanctus secundum spiritum, et sic [14]est Inuisibilis, immortalis spiritus et clarissimus. Sicut enim In persona [15]Christi Caro assumpta visibilis, Deus assumens Inuisibilis. Ita quilibet [16]Iesus secundum hominem visibilem assumptus, Sed secundum hominem [17]interiorem Inuisibilem assumens.

Igitur idem est, siue dicas, Qui facis [18]{spiritus angelos tuos/ [19]angelos tuos spiritus} i. e. [20]{spirituales, vt sint angeli tui/ [21]Angelos tuos, vt sint spiritus} Sic eodem modo Et [22]{ministros tuos ignem vrentem/ [23]ignem vrentem ministros tuos} Melius tamen, vt Iacent verba in ordine [24]suo, quia differentiam ponit Gratie et legis. Lex enim Angelos habuit [25]non spiritus, Sed carnem, Non ignem vrentem, Sed aquam fluentem, [26]i. e. mortales homines.

[27]Vnde mirabilis est iste psal[mus, Nam ex Apost[olo, Heb. 1., cogimur [28]istum versum de angelis ad literam accipere celestibus, Et per consequens [29]etiam alia, saltem multa. Econtra in multis indicat se spiritualiter loqui.”

See also WA 55, I, 819 gloss 1; WA 57, b222, 24 – b223, 23.

<sup>425</sup> See WA 56, 379, 1-17; AWA 2, 320, 15 – 321, 5.

old form and makes the human person non-being in order to impart to him the form of Christ.<sup>426</sup> Luther summarizes this process:

GLOSS 6) Up to this point he teaches becoming a new man and describes the new birth, which gives new being, John 3. Now, however, he teaches the works of the new birth, which are attempted in vain, if one has not yet been made a new man. Being (*esse*) precedes action (*operari*), suffering (*pati*) precedes being (*esse*). Therefore becoming (*fieri*), being (*esse*) and action (*operari*) follow each other.<sup>427</sup>

As can be seen from the foregoing analysis, Luther's understanding of the new birth of the Christian in the infusion of faith corresponds to his understanding of the two distinct works of God (the visible creation and the invisible creation) as well as the three-stage structure of the world. The human creature with regard to his old being as a carnal person is part of the visible world. Through the infusion of faith he is created anew, so that he becomes part of the invisible world and the New Creation, the Church.<sup>428</sup> On the one hand, it can be said that infused faith elevates him to heavenly life, and that he thus crosses over through the cloud into the presence of God as Moses did. This crossing over corresponds to leaving the Forecourt and entering through the veil of the Tabernacle into the Holy: turning from outwards to inwards. On the other hand, it can be said that in the infusion of faith God descends to the heart of the believer, so that his spirit is no longer empty, but that it becomes the dwelling place of God. These actions happen simultaneously and according to Luther are the same act.<sup>429</sup>

#### 2.4.2.2 *The Duality of Christian Existence: The Conflict between the Spirit and the Flesh*

However, as the Church is still hidden, so is the spiritual life of the Christian, and as the Church is travelling from its persecuted state towards the heavenly glory, so is the Christian.<sup>430</sup> Therefore, the Christian is not purely spirit (although insofar he is a Christian his primary identity is with the spirit), but the infusion of faith constitutes a starting point in his existence of the struggle between the spirit and the flesh.<sup>431</sup> The flesh that was at

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<sup>426</sup> WA 56, 441, 13 – 442, 26; WA 2, 548, 20-29. Luther does not think, however, that this process takes place only at the birth of faith and in the first imparting of righteousness. As the human being also remains a sinner at the same time when he is made righteous, the life of the Christian constitutes an ongoing process in which he is always in non-being (*non esse*), always in becoming (*fieri*) and always in being (*esse*). On the analysis of the Aristotelian concept of movement behind Luther's text, see Dieter 2001, 335-343. On the idea of the transformation of the Christian into new being see also Peura 1994, 144-150.

<sup>427</sup> WA 56, 117 gloss 6: "GLOSSA.<sup>6</sup> [25]Hucusque docuit nouum hominem fieri et nouam natiuitatem [26]descripsit, que dat nouum esse, Iohann. 3. Nunc vero Noue natiuitatis [27]opera docet, Que frustra presumit nondum nouus homo factus. Prius [28]est enim esse quam operari, prius autem pati quam esse. Ergo fieri, esse, [29]operari se sequuntur."

<sup>428</sup> See chapters 2.3.2 and 2.3.3.3. See also WA 2, 614, 28-36.

<sup>429</sup> WA 55, I, 214 gloss 5; WA 55, II, 452, 102 – 453, 129; 654, 297 – 655, 316; WA 56, 229, 7 – 230, 8; AWA 2, 107, 9-13; 108, 1-5; 202, 21 – 203, 2; WA 5, 506, 26 – 507, 15.

<sup>430</sup> See chapters 2.3.3.3 and 3.4.

<sup>431</sup> WA 57, a19, 1-10: "[2, 19] **Ego enim**<sup>1</sup> et quilibet in Christum [2] credens **per legem**: sc. spiritus, fidei **legi** operum et littere **mortuus sum** [3] sicut debitor mortuus nihil debet exactori suo, ita nec iustus legi

peace is now roused to conflict against the flesh. There are two aspects to this conflict, which we will consider next.

The first aspect of the conflict concerns concupiscence. Luther describes it in the *Dictata* as follows:

Therefore **I however**, he says, **have been humbled exceedingly**, i.e., have been afflicted because of the word of the Cross, because it is a scandal and foolishness to the proud. ‘Humiliated’ is namely commonly used in this way, as previously: ‘I have been altogether humiliated, O Lord’. Truly this happens even in a moral way, so that a person afflicts himself deeply, when the conscience declares faith to him. Or certainly, when the spirit begins to live from faith and mind those things which are God’s, soon the flesh rises and will persecute as the Pharaoh persecuted the Israelites and the Synagogue the Apostles of Christ. At that point it will begin to desire (*concupiscere*) against the spirit and the spirit against it. Then the spirit says this with the Apostle: ‘Wretched man that I am, who will liberate me from the death of this body? I namely see another law in my members, opposing the law of my mind and capturing me in the law of sin’ etc. This is [the same as] when the Psalmist says: ‘I however have been humbled exceedingly’, namely by the law of the members, because by faith the law of the mind was awakened. ‘I have believed’, as if he would say: ‘I take delight in the law of God according to my internal man.’ But also the flesh, which formerly slept when it alone ruled over the spirit, stays awake in guard against its enemy.<sup>432</sup>

Luther states the same thing in multiple places: when grace awakens the spirit and creates the man anew, a battle begins between the spirit and the flesh. The word separates the spirit from the corporeal, animal and evil affects, so purifying the heart. If the life of a carnal person was peaceful when the spirit slept, and the infusion of grace was at first an anguishing experience because the word afflicted the flesh and the flesh did not understand it, now there exist simultaneously internal peace in the spirit and external conflict in the flesh. Grace even awakens the entire world and the Devil to begin waging a war against the Christian. Externally, the Christian may thus appear most wretched, while internally he is secure and at peace. Luther does admit, however, that sometimes both the

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**ut deo** [4] **uiuiam**: sc. in spiritu et novo homine, et sic Deo debitor sim ideo vivo [5] Deo, quia **Christo confixus sum cruci**. sc. secundum veterem hominem, [6] qui vivebat legi [2, 20] **Viui autem** sc. secundum novum hominem **iam** [7] **non ego**: quia ego sum vetus homo **viuit uero in me Christus**. qui vivit [8] soli Deo, ad Ro. 7.: ‘Quod autem vivit, vivit Deo’ **Quod**<sup>2</sup>.<sup>3</sup> **autem nunc** [9] **uiui** sc. in tempore huius mortis **in carne**: licet non secundum carnem [10] **in fide uiui** q. d. vita carnis non est mea vita propria”

On this conflict see also Vind 2010, 28-33 and chapter 3.4.3.

<sup>432</sup> WA 55, II, 882, 55-69: “Ideo **Ego autem** inquit **humiliatus sum** [56] **nimis**, i. e. afflicto propter verbum crucis, quia scandalum est superbis et [57] stultitia. Sic enim communiter ‘humiliatus’ accipitur, Vt infra: ‘humiliatus [58] sum vsquequaque, Domine’. Verum moraliter quoque id fit, vt homo [59] seipsum affligat nimis, Vbi conscientia sibi dictat fidem. Vel certe, Vbi incipit [60] spiritus ex fide viuere et sapere que Dei sunt, mox caro insurgit, et persequitur [61] sicut Pharaoh Israelitas Et Synagoga Apostolos Christi. Tunc enim [62] incipit ipsa concupiscere aduersus spiritum et spiritus aduersus eam. Tunc [63] spiritus dicit illud cum Apostolo Ro. 7.: ‘Infelix homo ego, quis me liberabit [64] de morte corporis huius? Video enim aliam legem in membris meis repugnantem [65] legi mentis meę et captiuantem me in legem peccati’ etc. Hoc est, [66] quod iste dicit: ‘Ego autem humiliatus sum nimis’, scil. a lege membrorum, [67] quia per fidem lex mentis euigilauit. Credidi enim, hoc est vt ille ait: [68] ‘Condelector enim legi Dei secundum interiorem hominem’. Sed tunc hostis [69] simul euigilat caro, que dormiuit, quando sola regnabat super spiritum.”

internal peace and the external conflict remain hidden, but that they nevertheless exist.<sup>433</sup> Therefore, for Luther the experience of a Christian is – save for some specific occurrences<sup>434</sup> – dual and divided. The spirit receives the word with pleasure, is at peace with God and seeks to fulfill God's law of love through the external members. But the flesh receives the word only with "the greatest aversion"; it is at war with the spirit and seeks to regain control of the person. It and resists the actualization of the imperatives of the spirit in the corporeal members. Most of Luther's texts in which the influence of the word on the person is treated aptly illustrate this duality. For an example, Luther writes in the *Operationes* about why the word is called an iron sceptre:

You can see that this verse is completely allegorical, and not without reason, because it signifies an allegory taking place in life and by the thing itself. For since the Word of Christ is the Word of prosperity and peace, the Word of life and grace, and since it works not in the flesh, but in the spirit, it must suppress and drive out the prosperity, peace, life, and grace of the flesh. When it does this, it appears to the flesh harder and crueler than iron itself. For whenever a carnal man is touched in a wholesome way by the Word of God, one thing is felt, but another actually happens, accordingly with 'the Lord kills and brings to life, sets down to Hell and brings back [...] humbles and exalts.' This allegorical action of God is beautifully depicted by Is. 28: 'So that he would perform his proper work, his work is alien from him, so that his work would be accomplished, his work is foreign from him', as to say: Although He is the God of life and salvation and this is His proper work, yet, in order to accomplish this, He kills and destroys, which are works alien to him, so that he could arrive at his proper work. He namely kills our will so that he would establish his own in us, mortifies the flesh and its desires, to bring into life the spirit and its desires. This is what is said before without allegory: 'I will preach the precept of the Lord'. For the spirit accepts the Word of the Lord as a most pleasant command. And so it happens, that the Mount Zion becomes holy in the Kingdom, and the Nations will fall into its inheritance and the ends of the Earth into its possession. But the flesh endures the commandment or Word of God with the greatest aversion; nor does it recognize it, since it is completely contrary to it in every way.<sup>435</sup>

<sup>433</sup> WA 57, a54, 27 – a55, 13; WA 57, b161, 9-14; WA 2, 456, 29 – 457, 19.

<sup>434</sup> Luther seems to be open to the possibility that in special instances the soul might be lifted to heaven so that it does not feel the restraints of the flesh. See WA 6, 121, 23 – 122, 6. See also WA 56, 258, 8-15. Vind 2010, 33-36 is therefore wrong in interpreting the extraordinary experiences as the joy experienced after tribulation. Luther seems to seem to have an even more extraordinary experience of heavenly rapture in mind.

<sup>435</sup> AWA 2, 97, 12 - 98, 8: "Vides autem et hunc versum esse totum allegoricum, non sine vasa, siquidem significant quondam allegoriam, quae geritur re ipse et vita. Cum enim verbum Christi sit verbum salutis et pacis, verbum vitae et gratiae, atque haec non in carne, sed in spiritu operetur, necesse est, ut salutem, pacem, vitam, gratiam carnis opprimat et expellat. Quod cum facit, apparet carni ferro ipso durius et inclementius. Aliud enim sentitur et aliud fit, quoties homo carnalis verbo dei salubriter tangitur, nempe illud 1Reg 2<6s>: 'Dominus mortificat et vivificat, deducit ad inferos et reducit [...], humiliat et exaltat'. Hanc allegoricam operationem dei pulchre Is 28<21> depingit dicens: 'Ut faciat opus suum, alienum opus est eius, ut operetur opus suum, peregrinum est opus eius ab eo', quasi dicat: Cum sit deus vitae et salutis, et haec opera eius propria, tamen, ut operetur, occidit et perdit, quae sunt opera ei aliena, quo perveniat ad opus suum proprium. Occidit enim voluntatem nostram, ut statuatur in nobis suam; mortificat carnem et concupiscentias eius, ut vivificet spiritum et concupiscentias eius. Hoc est, quod supra <v 7> sine allegoria dixit: 'Praedicans praeceptum domini.' Spiritus enim accipit verbum dei ut praeceptum iucundissimum. Tunc enim fit, ut mons Zion sanctus <v 6> in regnum, et gentes in hereditatem, et termini terrae in



What is clearly observable in the quote is the dual and divergent effect of the word on the spirit and the flesh. The human being, having been created anew, shares both spirit and the flesh. Therefore the effect of the word, which previously was only distressing for the flesh, is now at the same time pleasurable for the spirit. As the proper work of grace is carried out under the alien work, now the word simultaneously effects two mutually opposite things: crucifying the flesh and pleasing the spirit. Therefore, the Word of God is simultaneously a word of the cross and salvation, the Law of Christ and the Gospel, judgement and sermon, word of discipline and goodness, word of destruction and edification.<sup>436</sup> The reason for this is that the Word in its proper nature as spirit (distinct from the sensual figures and the letter), spoken in the spirit of the hearer, is so concise and abridged that it does not touch the flesh and the external man, but only the internal man. In this sense, the word (with regard to its true content, is very much like a Platonic idea. It is immaterial and invisible, conferring spiritual and invisible goods that have to be received internally in the spirit. Therefore, the Word, like a blade, cuts and separates the person from the sensual objects of love and all created things. As it quiets the internal man, at the same time it brings the external man into anguish and darkness. Thus the Word perfects and weakens, fulfills and makes empty at the same time.<sup>437</sup> It turns the person away from external things and towards the internal things, kindling in him the love of the spiritual and eternal and contempt for the temporal, and so directs the person to the right way, making him straight (*rectus*) like the unbendable rod it is.<sup>438</sup>

The second aspect of the conflict is cognitive. The divine reality conferred by the Word now becomes present and accessible to the new person (internal man; the spirit) but it remains unknown and incomprehensible for the old person (external man; the flesh). Luther illustrates this aspect of the New Creation by speaking of the cloud in which God is hidden. At the beginning of the infusion of faith, the cloud meant the hiddenness of God under the external letter and the water of the baptism. In the infusion of faith, using the external word and signs of grace as his vehicle, Christ enters the human heart. When Christ enters, the external cloud becomes internal, covering the presence of Christ in the spirit, as the human being has become the Tabernacle of the Lord.<sup>439</sup> That Christ is present

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possessionem <v 8> cedant. At caro fert praeceptum seu verbum dei indignissime nec agnoscit ipsum, cum sit ei penitus et omnibus modis contrarium.”

<sup>436</sup> WA 55, I, 904-908; 906-907 glosses 7, 9, 10; WA 55, II, 733, 60-68; 848, 214-224; 898, 201-216; 904, 383-388; 926, 1039 – 927, 1051; 936, 1284-1292; 960, 1968 – 961, 1994; WA 56, 170, 7-25; WA 57, b109, 2-23; AWA 2, 97, 12 – 98, 8; 101, 1-8.

<sup>437</sup> WA 55, I 220 gloss 9; WA 56, 406, 16 – 407, 1; 409, 13 – 410, 19. See also WA 55, II, 253, 370 – 254, 393.

<sup>438</sup> WA 55, II, 654, 282 – 655, 323; 875, 43-58; AWA 2, 100, 16 – 102, 10. On this direction, see chapter 3.3.2.2.

<sup>439</sup> WA 5, 506, 26 – 507, 15: “[26] Sed ad montem Sinai quoque veniamus, de quo scriptum est, quod [27] descendente domino mons operiri coepit caligine, et ipse in vertice et medio [28] montis recte dicitur posuisse tenebras latibulum suum, quo eadem fides est [29] significata, per quam habitat in medio Ecclesiae suae in cordibus nostris, [30] ubi non videtur. Heae autem tenebrae, dum extra nos sunt, litera occidens [31] est terribilis prudentiae carnis, quae vehementer exhorret occidi et tamen [32] occidi oportet, sicut lex occidendam docet, ut cum Mose ascendat ad verticem [33] montis, ingresso in caliginem ad dominum. Neque enim ad dominum [34] intra caliginem venit, nisi mortificata per legem prudentia carnis [35] ‘In circuitu suo tabernaculum’, scilicet posuit, idem est per repetitionem, [36] quanquam in hebraeo non sit praepositio ‘in’, sed ‘sic circuitum suum tabernaculum [37] suum’, hoc est: sicut posuit, ut tenebrae essent latibulum suum, ita [38] posuit, ut et circuitus suus esset tabernaculum suum. Quod mihi videtur [39] in eum sensum dici, quod fides seu Ecclesia fide sanctificata sit illud, in [40] quo deus moratur. Nam ideo ponit

in the internal cloud signifies that the presence of Christ is not understood by the old man. Faith forms a cloud in the intellect (here used in the wider sense of both the lower and higher intellect), covering and hiding the superior part (i.e., spirit and internal man, the proper intellect) from the inferior part (soul and reason, the lower intellect). Thus for the old man the presence of Christ in faith is mere darkness, and causes him cognitive anguish.<sup>440</sup> Only the new, internal man and the intellect of faith can grasp this presence. Luther describes this dual nature of the cognition of the Christian as follows:

Cloud and darkness is around Christ, and he himself is in the middle of the cloud that is in the soul and in the middle of the darkness that is in the flesh. For the new man by faith receives the cloud, that is, a gloomy light, and by this the old man receives the darkness and is obscured in a beneficial way. Because when the spirit is illuminated, the flesh is blinded, the latter by justice and the former by righteousness. And so is the throne of Christ restored.<sup>441</sup>

So, as we can see, through the infusion of faith the human person has been restored as the Throne of Christ. Christ, however, dwells in the person in a way analogous to the presence of God in the Temple and in the desert of Sinai. For the flesh, his dwelling place is in darkness, but for the spirit, a gloomy light proceeds out as it did from the pillar of

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tabernaculum suum non nisi id, quo [1] circuitur, idest clauditur et absconditur, sicut sancto sanctorum circumibatur [2] et claudebatur et in monte Sinai nube et caligine circumibatur. Et valet [3] adversus personarum respectum, quod dicit tabernaculum suum esse id, quo [4] circuitur. Quicquid illud tandem sit, nec nomen nec personam habet. Quicumque [5] [Gal. 3, 28.] enim eum circundant eique adherent, sive gentes sive Iudaei, fiunt [6] eius tabernaculum, non est enim distinctio. Verum aspera (ut dixi) haec [7] carni ingressurae sunt, suavia spiritui ingresso. Non enim homo nisi per [8] tenebras fidei, fides non nisi per mortificationem carnis ingreditur. Unde [9] tenebrae istae, donec sunt exteriores, mors et infernus sunt, ubi fuerint factae [10] interiores, vita et salus sunt. Litera enim opponit caliginem et crucem, sed [11] spiritus fidei perrumpit et ingressus caliginem invenit dominum. Ideo qui [12] [2. Mos. 20, 19.] fugit et horret caliginem sicut populus Israel excusans se, ne fieret eis verbum [13] legis, non pervenit ad dominum. Nisi enim legem audieris, quae te [14] humiliet et crucifigat, dominum intus cum Mose loquentem non audies, sed [15] [2. Mos. 19, 20.] nec Moses intrat nisi vocante domino, sicut habent verba Exodi.”

<sup>440</sup> WA 55, II, 803, 110-113: “Et hoc est, quod iste versus dicit, Quod ‘Celum extendis [111] sicut pellem’, scil. super veterem hominem, vt eum pellem faciat. Et ‘tegit [112] aquis superiora eius’. Hee sunt Euangelice scripturae, quae hominem Interiorem [113] tegunt tegumento fidei et abscondito enigmatis.”

WA 55, II, 804, 138 – 805, 153: “[138] Spiritus enim Est Superius, Caro autem inferius hominis [139] in hac vita. Et sic homo prout rationalis vel secundum animam est [140] ‘firmamentum inter aquas et aquas’ i. e. inter sapientiam carnis et [141] spiritus. Si autem sese vertit ad sapientiam spiritus, iam superiora eius [142] teguntur aquis, quia [[non] inferiora, sed su[peri]ora eius tegit [143] [a]quis[.]. [144] **Qui ponis nubem ascensum tuum, Qui ambulas super pennas [145] ventorum.**[[Lit[eraliter]:]] Ad literam de Christo factum est, vt patet [146] Act. 1. Secundo Quia aquas tectrices dixerat, Ex quo sequitur, Quod in [147] tegumento et velamento istarum aquarum simus, Ac sic sine dubio in [148] Nube et fidei vmbraculo. In hac autem ascendit Christus et nos ascendere [149] facit. [[Trop[ologice]:]] Hec enim est Scala Iacob, Sed non nisi in somno et [150] visione perceptibilis. Quis enim sciat fidem esse Schalam et nubem ascensus, [151] nisi qui mundo dormit et visione spirituali vigilat? Igitur Tegi aquis [152] (i. e. captiuari intellectum verbis Euangelii) hocipsum est nubem accipere [153] in intellectu. Et hec nubes ponitur fixe pro fundamento.”

<sup>441</sup> WA 55, II, 754, 14-19: “**Nubes et caligo sit in circuitu** Christi, Et ipse in [15] medio nubis, que est in anima, Et caliginis, que est in carne. Nam Nouus [16] homo per fidem accepit nubem, i. e. enigmaticam lucem, Et per hoc vetus [17] homo accepit caliginem et obscuratus est salubriter. Quia dum spiritus [18] illustratur, caro excecatur; hoc per Iudicium et illud per Iustitiam. Et sic [19] est sedes Christi correctae.”

The descent of Christ in Incarnation, assumption of risen humanity, humbling the proud and at the sacrament of the altar all follow the same logic. See WA 55, II, 139, 3 – 140, 19.

cloud.<sup>442</sup> Therefore even if the senses and the carnal nature do not reach God's presence, the spirit experiences the incomprehensible presence and the help of God. Christ present in faith in the midst of darkness thus becomes a powerful proof (*argumentum*) of present but not visible things, augmenting the cognitive capacities of the Christian. Luther explains:

That in the Holy of Holies there was no light, signified God to be present in the Church by the faith of Christ in their hearts, which does not comprehend and is not comprehended, does not see and is not seen, but still sees all things. It is a powerful proof of present, but not visible things. Likewise the Ark of the Covenant was present in the Holy of Holies, but was not visible, because the Tabernacle surrounded it – in the midst of which in the Holy of Holies he sat – as is said in Ps. 46: 'God is present in the midst of the congregation', so that they cannot be shaken, as also similar prophecies derive from this figure. God does not rule among us superficially, with tongue and words, but in might, and they do not remain unshaken who believe with tongue and words, but 'those who believe in the heart, are justified', in the midst of whom God is present. They are the strong, who receive help from the face of God (that is, the presence of God), as Ps. 46: 'They will be helped from the face of God', or, 'at daybreak', that is, in the presence of the might and divinity and the face of God.<sup>443</sup>

Therefore, for Luther the cognitive experience of the Christian is also dual and divided. Through the intellect of faith (i.e., the light shining from the face of the present Christ) he can grasp spiritual and heavenly things, which are present for his internal man and spirit. At the same time the external man and flesh understand neither this presence nor this light. Luther states in numerous places, that the spirit and the flesh experience all things in opposite ways: the flesh suffers when the spirit rejoices, becomes cold when the spirit is warmed. Spiritual goods dilate the spirit but suppress the flesh (and vice versa). Doctrine and the Gospel is goodness for the new man and discipline for the old. The flesh serves the law of sin, the spirit the law of God. The former seeks external good and God in his positive properties, the latter under his negative properties.<sup>444</sup> This division is reflected even in the way Luther refers to the cognitive capacities of the carnal and the spiritual person. Luther usually uses the vocabulary of feeling (*sentire*) and seeing (*videre*) to describe the experiences of the carnal person. They are bound to sensible and visible things, which can be understood by reason (*ratio*) and from which phantasms and mental

<sup>442</sup> Cf WA 55, I 660 gloss 9; WA 55, II, 549, 438-442.

<sup>443</sup> WA 5, 506, 12-25: "[12] Quod enim in sancto sanctorum nullum fuit lumen, significabat, inhabitante [13] Ecclesiam suam deo per Christum fidem esse in cordibus eorum, quae nec [14] comprehendit nec comprehenditur nec videt nec videtur et tamen omnia [15] videt. Est enim argumentum rerum valde quidem praesentium, sed nequaquam [16] apparentium. Sicut Arca foederis erat praesentissime in sancto [17] sanctorum, non tamen apparebat, ita tabernaculum eius fuit in circuitu [18] eius, quia in medio sancti sanctorum ipse sedebat, quo significatum est, ut [19] [Ps. 46, 6.] ps. 45. dicit, Deum esse in medio Ecclesiae suae, ideo non posse eam [20] commoveri, quam et similes prophetiae ex ea figura hauserunt. Non enim [21] deus in nobis regnat superficialitatenus, lingua et verbo, sed in virtute, nec sunt [22] [Röm. 10, 9.] stabiles, qui in lingua et verbo in eum credunt, sed 'qui corde credunt, iusti [23] sunt', in quorum medio ipse habitat. Hi sunt fortes et adiuvantur in [24] [Ps. 46, 6.] omnibus vultu dei (idest praesentia dei), ut ps. 45. 'Adiuvabit eam deus [25] vultu suo', seu mane diluculo, idest praesenti valde numine et ipso vultu."

<sup>444</sup> WA 55, I, 208 gloss 6; WA 55, II, 189, 139 – 190, 150; 216, 42-47; 282, 62 – 283, 83; 349, 26 – 350, 49; 398, 419-432; 453, 137-155; 499, 2 – 500, 22; 624, 328-331; 926, 1039 – 927, 1051; 936, 1286-1292; 991, 2877 – 992, 2912; 997, 3069 – 998, 3093; 1025, 2 – 1026, 37; WA 56, 73, 3-11; 361, 6 – 363, 7; WA 2, 456, 29 – 457, 19; 517, 19-31.

images can be formed. But through them human beings grasp only the appearances of things (*species*), not what things really are. When Luther describes the cognitive capabilities of the spiritual person, rather than speaking of sensing and seeing, he speaks of experience (*experientia*, *experiri*) and understanding (*intellectus*, *intelligere*). Instead of appearances, they grasp the thing itself (*res*). The spiritual goods cannot be grasped by reason, but they rather seize the soul and draw it to follow them. Understanding them is not based on one's own abilities, but on the abilities given to the soul in faith.<sup>445</sup> Even though the abilities of the old and new man are related to different anthropological parts (i.e., soul vs. spirit), with regard to their function they are comparable. Thus, the old man and the new man operate almost as two distinct anthropological systems within the same person. A general comparison of the different terms Luther uses for the abilities of the old and new man can be made as follows:

Old man ('Flesh')

- Reason (*ratio*)
- Senses, feeling (*sensus*)
- Appearance (*species*)
- Visible and comprehensible things

New man ('Spirit')

- Intellect = faith (*intellectus*)
- Experience (*experientia*)
- The thing itself (*res*)
- Invisible and incomprehensible things

We have now come to see that in order to form a balanced view of Luther's understanding of the nature of the existence of the Christian, we must take into account the conflict between the flesh and the spirit, the old man and the new. From this strife it follows that for Luther there is always a certain element of passion and internal conflict in the life of the Christian. Even though Christ is present to the new will and intellect and rules the spiritual man in faith, the remaining carnal nature understands nothing of his presence. Therefore, both the act of faith itself and everything the person does in accordance with the directives of the spirit causes suffering for the flesh. For this reason Luther also holds that although the presence of Christ, the Word of God, fills the spirit with the virtues of faith, hope and charity, when these affects are realized in action there is always some resistance from the flesh. Thus faith and love, when incarnated into works,

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<sup>445</sup> WA 55, I, 520, 4-18; 520 gloss 20; WA 55, II, 56, 19 – 58, 1; 75, 25 – 76, 1; 179, 79 – 180, 107; 213, 124-140; 366, 291-304; 481, 481-488; 628, 430-445; 734, 109 – 735, 131; 758, 50 – 759, 55; 903, 342 – 364; 921, 872-897; WA 56, 70, 15-17; 445, 13 – 447, 27; WA 57, a93, 21 – a94, 12; WA 57, b159, 5-15; WA 2, 578, 40 – 579, 7; AWA 2, 45, 17-18; 70, 16-23; 106, 19 – 108, 13; 132, 1-16; 139, 7 – 141, 18; 178, 24-29; 179, 17 – 182, 18; 199, 25 – 204, 5; 318, 5-19; 547, 16 – 548, 1-4; 559, 17- 560, 2; 617, 7-18; WA 5, 410, 36-38; 418, 9- 419, 21; 474, 13-21; 506, 9-34; 555, 28-40; 570, 8-17; 623, 17-40. Note, however, that Luther uses the terms seeing (*visio*) and appearance (*species*) versus reality (*res*) from two different viewpoints. One is that of the natural cognition, in which respect the spiritual things are unseen and not present *in re*. The other is the cognition of faith and the viewpoint of the spiritual man, with regard to whom the spiritual things are present and seen in faith and are more real than the carnal appearances. See chapter 2.3.3.3. The other terms can also be used with regard to the natural abilities. See WA 55, II, 903, 364-367; 916, 751 – 917, 761; WA 56, 58, 15-17; 424, 27 – 425, 5; AWA 2, 132, 10-11; 141, 8-10; 178, 29; 201, 14-15; 348, 15-19; 379, 4-8.

can never be totally pure in this life. The Christian remains at the same time sinner and righteous.<sup>446</sup> This ongoing conflict can be summarized as follows:

	<b>Old man ('Flesh')</b>	<b>New man ('Spirit')</b>
<b>Spirit</b>	Christ present in faith = darkness	Christ present in faith = light
<b>Soul</b>	Wishes to rule Senses and reason battle against faith	Ruled by faith Senses and reason complemented by faith
<b>Body</b>	Hates suffering  Resists commands of the spirit	Submits to suffering according to God's will Bends to the commands of the spirit

#### 2.4.2.3 The Relationship of the Flesh and the Spirit in the Same Person

Now arises the question of how Luther understands the relationship of the flesh and the spirit, the old man and the new, within the same person. How is it possible that the same person at the same time sees and does not see, accepts the word with pleasure and does not accept it, receives the light of faith and does not receive it? Furthermore, what kinds of consequences does this internal and cognitive duality cause for the unity of the person? How are the flesh and spirit as the two 'natures' of the person related to each other?

Luther's answer to the question seems to develop somewhat over the course of his works discussed in the present study, but here as well the basic principles remain the same. These principles can be summarized as follows: 1) Even though the concepts of the flesh and the spirit are applied to the whole man and to the affect, nevertheless they retain their connections to the anthropological parts. The spirit needs the flesh (or body) to act, and the person does not become wholly spiritual before the body becomes spiritual in the resurrection. 2) The relationship between the spirit and flesh is not static, but it is marked by movement and progress. 3) Because of this dynamic, the Christian is both flesh and spirit at the same time (*simul*), but still progressing and in this sense also partially (*partim*) spiritual and partially carnal. 4) As this movement includes progress and direction, in the Christian person the flesh (or sin) is ruled by spirit (or grace). The latter dictates what the person does, the former resists. 5) Acts of both 'parts' or 'natures' are attributed to the whole person. Furthermore, one can say that the subtle differences regarding how the relationship between flesh and spirit develops between Luther's earlier and later works echo the development of Luther's qualitative anthropology as presented in chapter 2.4.1.3. We can outline this correspondence in the following analysis.

In the *Dictata* the terms "spirit" and "flesh" seem to have the strongest connection to the anthropological parts. The flesh is connected with the body and sensuality, and seeks to set up its own idol and opinion (*sensus*) in the spirit.<sup>447</sup> Nevertheless, Luther can

<sup>446</sup> WA 56, 344, 23-30; WA 2, 497, 13 – 498, 1; 584, 35 – 585, 7; AWA 2, 317, 6 – 321, 5. This is also one of the reasons why in the life of the Christian there is always still sin and need for its forgiveness.

<sup>447</sup> WA 55, II, 882, 55-69; 972, 2321 – 973, 2339.

also speak of them as two natures: one acquired from Christ, the other being the person's own.<sup>448</sup> Furthermore, Luther confirms that these two make up the person. That is, the person is identical with them both:

Who could boast to be only spirit and not have also the flesh which opposes the spirit, even if he no longer has a share in lust (*luxuriae*) or greed (*avaritiae*) or other manifest wickedness, or has the temptation to them? For if you have flesh and are in the flesh, certainly some kind of its pride is with you and you are in it until the day this body becomes wholly spiritual. Therefore we always sin, always are impure. And if we say there is no sin in us, we are liars, because we deny that we have flesh. And wherever flesh is, it acts according to its wickedness and fights the spirit. And because the spirit and the flesh are one man, without a doubt it is his fault that the flesh is evil as it is and acts wickedly.<sup>449</sup>

One can see here how the two meanings penetrate each other. On one hand, the flesh is corporeality (and it remains until the body becomes spiritual in the resurrection). On the other hand, the flesh is wickedness defined by the evil affects. And whatever the spirit and the flesh may be, the human person nevertheless shares in both and is both, bearing responsibility for the sins of the flesh. However, the relationship between the two is not static. Even though they are related to each other in a fashion analogous to the two natures, the spiritual person should be in movement from the flesh to the spirit, from the carnal to the spiritual. However, were a person to consider himself wholly spiritual, progress would cease and he would revert to a carnal state.<sup>450</sup> Luther illustrates the nature of this transition using an analogy of the Aristotelian concept of movement.<sup>451</sup> The Christian is in motion: he is leaving this world and entering the future world. During this movement he is still imperfect, always partly acquired and partly to be acquired (*semper partim acquisitus et partim acquirendus*), between the opposites and at the same time consisting from both the starting point and the goal (*simul in termino a quo et ad quem consistens*).<sup>452</sup> In this way

<sup>448</sup> WA 55, I, 684, 1-4 and WA 55, I, 684 gloss 5.

<sup>449</sup> WA 55, II, 973, 2339-2348: "Quis enim gloriabitur se [2340] esse purum spiritum et non habere adhuc carnem aduersariam spiritui, [2341] etiam si iam nec luxurię nec auaritię aut aliarum manifestarum nequitiarum [2342] pars aut tentatio in ipso sit? Si enim Caro est tibi et in carne es, [2343] Certe superbia ista quoque tecum est et tu in illa, vsque dum corpus istud [2344] fiat totum spirituale. Semper ergo peccamus, semper immundi sumus. [2345] Et si dixerimus, quod peccatum non habemus, mendaces sumus, Quia [2346] negamus nos habere carnem, Cum tamen caro vbicunque sit, secum ista [2347] mala habet, vt spiritum impugnet. Et quia Spiritus et caro vnus homo est, [2348] Sine dubio Culpa hominis est, Quod caro tam mala est et male agit."

<sup>450</sup> WA 55, II, 911, 609 – 912, 632; 942, 1451-1468; 973, 2348-2360; 987, 2768 – 988, 2792; Thus the way in which Luther examines the relationship between the spirit and the flesh is connected with the concepts of humility and pride as well as good and evil. Humility (as the prime monastic virtue) guards the spiritual person, and pride as the prime vice forfeits it. Luther's concept of humility can be seen as linked to this thought. This theme is also connected with Luther's notion of God as the only true good. If a person calls himself good he robs God of God's goodness, while when he condemns himself he confesses the goodness of God. On humility, see WA 55, II, 471, 219 – 472, 247; 720, 81 – 721, 94; 872, 39 – 873, 67; 885, 160-167; 887, 230 – 888, 261; 888, 6 - 889, 40; 940, 1408 – 941, 1426; On goodness, see chapter 2.2.2.

<sup>451</sup> As a thorough analysis how Luther understands this concept and uses it in his theological argumentation see Dieter 2001, 276-346.

<sup>452</sup> WA 55, II, 971, 2287-2300: "[2287] 118, 121 **Feci Iudicium et Iustitiam; non trad[as] me Calum[niantibus [2288] me.** [2289] Licet non perfecerim, Sum tamen in opere, feci et facio. Quis enim [2290] perfectus est aut se apprehendisse putat? Igitur Quę fecisti, perficienda [2291] sunt. Vt Ecclesiastes:

already in the *Dictata* Luther introduces the later more developed concepts of *simul* and *partim*, although he does not yet use them explicitly of the Christian as *simul iustus et peccator*. But because the model of the Christian life is movement, it requires direction and progress. Therefore, the opposite natures do not have an equal standing. In the Christian, the spirit must rule and subject the flesh. However, the spirit only subjects the flesh, does not annihilate it. Thus the aspect of corporeality appears again: the spirit needs the flesh to use it in order to serve. If the flesh overcomes, however, it annihilates the spirit, leaving nothing remaining.<sup>453</sup> Under the rule of the spirit the person thus progresses in faith, becoming more and more spiritual and more sensitive in the spirit to the divine things, yet never perfect in this life.<sup>454</sup>

In the *Lectures on Romans*, on the other hand, the concept of the Christian as *simul iustus et peccator* (at the same time righteous and sinner) comes strongly to the fore. The Christian is at the same time righteous and not righteous, sinner and non-sinner.<sup>455</sup> On the one hand Luther can state, that the Christian is a sinner actually (*in re*), and righteous by reputation and promise in hope (*in spe*).<sup>456</sup> On the other hand, he is righteous and eternal insofar he lives in spirit, unrighteous and temporal insofar he lives in flesh. Thus Luther retains the ontological framework behind the distinction.<sup>457</sup> In faith, and as a spiritual person, he is elevated over everything, but in temporal things he is subject to everything. Thus he is (as Christ) like a twin, having two forms in himself.<sup>458</sup> Luther also compares the relationship between the spirit and the flesh to that between sickness and health: they are aspects of the same whole. In this respect the spirit and the flesh are not two, but one.<sup>459</sup>

In the *Lectures on Romans* Luther also uses ideas from Augustine's *Contra Iulianum* and *Retractiones*, presenting them in the course of commenting on Romans 7:7.<sup>460</sup> In this text Luther repeats the basic conviction (expressed already in the *Dictata*) that the carnal person is simple and does not suffer from internal battle, whereas the spiritual person does suffer from it. Furthermore, the spiritual person and the carnal person wish and mind (*sapit*) opposite things.<sup>461</sup> Second, Luther states that when the Apostle speaks about doing evil ("*quod odi malum, illud facio*"), he does not mean that he would not do external good deeds, but rather that because of the resistance from the flesh he does not do them as

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'Quid est quod fuit? id quod faciendum.' 'Homo enim [2292] cum Consummaverit, tunc incipiet.' 'Non enim fecisse satis est et quiescere, [2293] Sed secundum philosophiam Motus est Actus imperfectus, semper partim [2294] acquisitus et partim acquirendus, Semper in medio contrariorum et simul [2295] in termino a quo et ad quem consistens. Quod si in vno fuerit tantum, iam [2296] 4, 363 nec Motus | est. Vita autem presens Est Motus quidam et phase, i. e. transitus [2297] et Gallilea, i. e. Migratio ex hoc mundo ad futuram, que est quies [2298] eterna. Ergo partim illam habemus in conscientia, partim tribulationes in [2299] carne. Et sic inter Mala peccatorum et bona meritorum assidue mouemur [2300] Velut in termino a quo et ad quem. Sed hec latius alibi tractanda."

<sup>453</sup> WA 55, II, 845, 115 – 846, 166.

<sup>454</sup> WA 55, I, 916 gloss 5; WA 55, II, 122, 23-27; 882, 55-69; 863, 335 – 864, 344; 873, 5-9; 911, 609 – 912, 632; 972, 2321 – 973, 2348.

<sup>455</sup> WA 56, 269, 21 – 271, 31.

<sup>456</sup> WA 56, 272, 3-21.

<sup>457</sup> WA 56, 293, 14-30; 298, 8-15; 327, 9 – 328, 6.

<sup>458</sup> WA 56, 476, 2-26.

<sup>459</sup> WA 56, 217, 8-25; 272, 3 – 273, 1; 350, 22 – 352, 20.

<sup>460</sup> WA 56, 339, 4 – 347, 28.

<sup>461</sup> WA 56, 340, 5 – 341, 25.

much, with such ease, and to the degree that he would wish. To explain the nature of this conflict, Luther takes up Augustine's distinction between *facere* and *perficere*, to do and to do perfectly (i.e., with the entire will), thus deepening the nature of the distinction in relation to the *Dictata*.<sup>462</sup> However, Luther does not content himself with using only this Augustinian distinction. He also explicitly takes the model of Christ's person to illustrate the relationship between the spirit and the flesh in the believer. In his comments on Romans 7:18-19 ("I know that no good is in me, that is, in my flesh. I am able to will good, but not to complete it. I namely do not do that good which I will, but that evil which I do not will, I commit"), he states the following:

Sixth. I know that no good is in me, that is, in my flesh. See, how he ascribes to himself his flesh, a part of him, as if he himself were flesh. As he said before: "I am carnal"; he now confesses himself to be evil, not good, because he commits evil. On account of the flesh he is carnal and evil, because there is no good in him and he commits evil, on account of the spirit he is spiritual and good, because he does good. Therefore it is to be noted that these words, "I want" and "I hate" refer to the spiritual man or spirit, "I do" and "I act" to the carnal or to the flesh. But because the flesh and the spirit constitute one and the same single human being, therefore he ascribes to the whole man both the contraries which come from his contrary parts. Therefore a communication of attributes takes place, so that the same human being is spiritual and carnal, righteous and sinner, good and evil, as the same person of Christ is at the same time dead and alive, at the same time suffering and blessed, at the same time active and at rest etc, on account of the communication of the attributes, even though neither nature agrees with that which is proper to the other, but rather in a most contrary way disagrees with it, as is known. This however has no place in the carnal man, where the whole man is totally flesh, and the spirit of God does not remain in him. [...] Truly the Apostle, looking at the identity of the person, sees a marriage [*Coniugium*] in each one of them, so that the flesh is the wife, and the soul or the mind the husband. When they both consent to concupiscence, they are one flesh like Adam and Eve. If however the mind, the husband of the flesh, dies spiritually, we are now dead in the whole person to the flesh, and so we are also liberated in the whole person. Even though one refers to the flesh and the other to the spirit, even then we are the same, the man dead and the woman liberated from the Law, which made this man and this marriage, i.e., by its irritation increased the concupiscence and made the mind consent to its opportunity. Therefore we, the wife on account of the flesh, i.e., carnal people, and man on account of the spirit which consented with the flesh, are now at the same time dead and liberated. Because of this the benefit of the both comes to the person, though the parts, on account of which it comes, are opposite. For the properties of the parts communicate to the whole that which they have individually.<sup>463</sup>

<sup>462</sup> WA 56, 341, 26 – 342, 29. So also Saarinen 2011, 115-123. Saarinen, however, considers the "spiritual man" as the subject of the person's actions and does not comment on Luther's application of the *communicatio idiomatum* to the Christian person, the subject on which the analysis of this chapter of the present study focuses on.

<sup>463</sup> WA 56, 343, 8 – 344, 17: "[8] Sextum: **Scio, Quia non habitat in me, hoc est in carne mea, [9] bonum** [7, 18]. Vide, quomodo carnem, partem sui, sibi tribuit, quasi [10] ipse sit caro. ideo supra dixit: 'carnalis | sum |'; ita nunc se non bonum, [11] Sed malum fatetur, quia facit malum. Propter carnem est carnalis et [12] malus, quia non est bonum in eo et facit malum; propter spiritum est [13] Bl. 88. spiritualis et \*bonus, quia facit bonum. Ideo Notandum, Quod [14] hoc verbum 'Volo' et 'odio' ad spirituales hominem



As in Christology, in which the two natures of Christ (divinity and humanity) are united without mixture or change, but unseparated and undivided so that the actions and experiences of either nature, even when they are opposite to each other, are attributed to the same person of Christ, so also does Luther think that the flesh and the spirit are two conflicting ‘parts’ or natures of the human being which together form a single person. This model explains more fully how Luther understands the relationship between the whole and the parts. As in the hypostatic union both the natures are whole natures and the whole Christ is wholly man and wholly God, so also in the Christian person the same man can be considered at the same time wholly sinner and wholly righteous. But as the natures can also be called (in a more relaxed sense of everyday language) ‘parts’ which ‘form’ the person of Christ, so can also the Christian man be called partly sinner and partly righteous.<sup>464</sup> In this sense, there can be development and interaction between the natures. One nature can occupy the ruling position and be stronger in proportion to the other. Nevertheless, the other nature can resist so that the external act is neither purely spiritual nor carnal, and yet one can ascribe the properties and acts of both the natures to the same person.<sup>465</sup> The actions and experiences of both natures are attributed to one and the same person, and are properly acts and properties of the single individual, even though they may be separate and contradictory. The flesh and the spirit may want opposing things and sense things in an opposing manner (*diverse sentiant*), yet nevertheless both desires and experiences are attributed to the same person.<sup>466</sup> Thus the Christological analogy comes

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seu [15] spiritum, ‘facio’ autem et ‘operor’ ad carnalem seu ad carnem [16] | refertur |. Sed quia ex carne et spiritu idem vnus homo constat [17] totalis, ideo toti homini tribuit vtrique contraria, que ex contrariis [18] sui partibus veniunt. Sic enim fit communio Ideomatum, Quod idem [19] homo est spiritualis et carnalis, Iustus et peccator, Bonus et malus. [20] Sicut eadem persona Christi simul mortua et viua, simul passa et beata, [21] simul operata et quiescente etc. propter communionem Ideomatum, licet [22] neutri naturarum alterius proprium conueniat, Sed contrariissime dissentiat, [23] vt notum est. Hęc autem in Carnali homine nequaquam habent [24] locum, Vbi omnino totus homo caro est, quia non permansit in eo [25] spiritus Dei. Ideo carnalis non potest dicere: ‘in me id est in carne mea’, [26] quasi ipse aliud a carne per voluntatem sit, Sed est idem cum carne per [27] consensum in concupiscentias eius, Sicut vir et mulier vna sunt caro [28] figuratiue, Sed meretricialiter et fornicarie. Et ex hoc iam potest [1] melius intelligi, Quod supra dixit in similitudine, Mortuo viro mulierem [2] esse Liberam, cuius similitudinis ideo videtur inepta applicatio, [3] Quia dicit potius animam ipsam velut mulierem mortificari et sic liberari, [4] virum autem i. e. passiones peccatorum manere, Sed captiuari etc. [5] Verum Apostolus ad persone identitatem respiciens Coniugium in vnoquoque [6] videt, Quod Caro sit mulier et anima vel mens sit vir. Quę [7] dum sibi in concupiscentias consentiunt, sicut Adam et Eva sunt vna [8] caro. Si autem moriatur mens, vir carnis, morte spirituali, iam nos [9] mortificati sumus in tota persona legi, Et sic Liberati etiam in tota [10] persona. Licet alterum respiciat carnem, alterum spiritum, idem tamen [11] ipsi sumus nos, vir mortificatus et mulier liberata a lege, que faciebat [12] hunc virum et hoc coniugium, i. e. irritatione sua auxit concupiscentiam [13] et mentem cum carne consentire occasione sui fecit. Ergo nos, mulier [14] propter carnem i. e. carnales, et vir propter spiritum carni consentientem, [15] simul sumus mortui et liberati. Quia persone prouenit hęc vtilitas [16] vtrique, licet partes sint diuersę, propter quas prouenit. Communicant [17] enim ideomata partes toti suo singulas suas.”

<sup>464</sup> Nilsson 1966, 312-322 and Ebeling 1989, 192-196 correctly note the importance of the Christological *communicatio idiomatum* analogy for Luther’s anthropology. Nilsson also correctly points to its role in explaining the relationship between the total and partial aspects of the *simul* doctrine.

<sup>465</sup> See WA 56, 69 gloss 2; 73, 3-11; 342, 30 – 343, 7; 441, 13 – 442, 26.

<sup>466</sup> WA 56, 344, 23 – 345, 2: “[23] Septimum: **Velle mihi adiacet, perficere autem non Inuenio** [24] [7, 18]. Istud ‘Velle’ est promptitudo spiritus, quę ex Charitate est, de [25] qua dixit: ‘Non, quod volo bonum.’ Et psalmo 1: ‘Sed in lege Domini [26] Voluntas eius.’ Sic nunc ‘Velle mihi adiacet’ i. e. beneplacitum et delectatio [27] boni, quod lex precipit, vt et infra: ‘Condelector legi Dei secundum [28] interiorem hominem’, Sed ‘perficere’, scil. hoc bonum legis, resistente [29] carne non potest. Quia Vult non

closest to providing an answer to the question of how it is possible that mutually opposite and contradictory experiences take place at the same time within the same person.

Furthermore, one should note that Luther almost always uses the term *homo* when he speaks about the constitution of the human being (both the tripartite and bipartite anthropology). With regard to the latter there is literally the old and new, carnal and spiritual, external and internal *man* which battle with each other. Here, however, Luther uses the concept of “person” to name the subject of these two (and the tripartite anthropology as well). Thus “person” (*persona*) becomes the term for the subject to whom the individual properties and opposite experiences are ascribed, and it alone seems to guarantee the identity and unity of the subject. Therefore, it is my opinion that we can see at this point in Luther’s thought a unique transformation and break with the medieval tradition of theological and philosophical anthropology. Luther takes the idea of the tripartite man from medieval theology and builds his own system upon it. But Luther breaks this system when he relates it to the Pauline anthropology and interprets the flesh and the spirit as two wholes (*totus homo*) – not only different parts – which battle within the same person. This reinterpretation brings about the obvious difficulty of relating the differing and opposite desires and experiences of the old and the new man together in the same subject. Luther’s best response to this difficulty seems to be to take Trinitarian and Christological doctrine of “person” and to apply it to the person of the believer. Apart from that, however, the concept of the person has little role in Luther’s usual discussions of anthropology. The concept has no explanatory role with regard to the function of the human being in relation to the visible or invisible world, and besides its role as the subject of the two natures’ contradictory experiences, it does not play a significant role in Luther’s anthropological hierarchies.<sup>467</sup>

The idea of the Christian’s being at the same time righteous and sinner is further developed in the *Lectures on Galatians* and the *Commentary on Galatians*, in both of which Luther also builds strongly upon Augustine. In the *Lectures on Galatians*, Luther again confirms the dependence of the spiritual person and righteousness on participation in Christ. The Christian person is in the process of transformation, but is not yet wholly spiritual. The flesh, however, is now clearly defined as everything outside the grace of Christ: not only sensuality and corporality, but also the reason. The spiritual man nevertheless retains a connection to the invisible. The flesh and the spirit are strongly opposed to each other.<sup>468</sup> Luther also uses in the *Lectures on Galatians* the distinctions between *facere* vs. *perficere* and ruling sin vs. ruled sin (or ruling grace) to illustrate the duality that exists in the Christian person. Christians are still carnal, because even though

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concupiscere et bonum Iudicat [30] Bl. 88b. non concupiscere, et tamen concupiscit \*et non perficit hoc velle suum [31] Et ita secum ipse pugnat, Sed quia spiritus et caro coniunctissime sunt [1] vnum, licet diuerse sentiant, ideo vtriusque opus sibi toti tribuit, quasi [2] simul sit totus caro et totus spiritus.”

<sup>467</sup> The other instance in which Luther often uses the term “person” of the human being is the concept of God’s equality, related to the juridical use of the term. God does not look to the person (i.e. role), but is treats everyone equally. In this case, the term “person” refers in a negative sense to the distinguishing properties of the individual. See WA 55, I, 657, gloss 13; WA 55, II, 94, 10 – 96, 11; 108, 15 – 109, 13; WA 57, a67, 14 – a68, 10; a100, 17 – 102, 4; WA 2, 480, 11-25; 530, 1-27; 577, 19-27; 578, 39 – 579, 16; AWA 2, 34, 9 – 35, 11; 49, 7-19; 308, 18-29. A good overview of these two uses of the concept of person in Luther can be found in Ebeling 1989, 192-207.

<sup>468</sup> WA 57, a19, 1-10; a58, 20 – a59, 1; a74, 5-18; a77, 17 – a79, 2; a98, 12-18; a99, 13-19; a103, 10-21. See also this dissertation p. 101 ff.

they do not perfect (*perficere*) their concupiscence but rather do (*facere*) good, they nevertheless have concupiscence and so do not perfect that good which they do either. They “have sin” when and because they feel concupiscence, but they do not follow its titillations up to the act itself. Thus sin does not rule them, and they “do not sin”. On account of having sin they are nevertheless partially carnal. Because of this remaining sin and carnality, Christian life is defined as a fight and progress which has not yet been perfected.<sup>469</sup>

The *Lectures on Galatians*, however, are quite short and their content is expanded in the *Commentary on Galatians*. In the latter work, Luther employs the same *facere* – *perficere* – distinction, again with explicit reference to Augustine’s *Contra Iulianum* and *Retractiones*. Because Christians do not perfect their good will owing to resistance from the flesh, they are partly carnal, partly spiritual. For this reason, all of their good works also are partially evil. Thus it can be said that the same man at the same time both sins and does not sin.<sup>470</sup> Internally, however, the Christian is already fully spiritual. The spirit of the justified is pure and without sin through faith. In the flesh there nevertheless remains some sin, which is not imputed for sin on account of the faith of the internal man. The spirit, ruling the Christian like Christ rules his Church, continuously drives this sin out, although this action will be complete only in the future consummation.<sup>471</sup> As in the previous works, Luther connects the flesh and the spirit to their respective affects. The flesh lusts through the soul and the spirit; the spirit moves the flesh. In this sense, Luther likens the relationship between the flesh and the spirit to sickness and health: both are parts and opposite aspects of the same whole. When the spirit wholly agrees (*consenserit*) with the affects of the flesh it is wholly flesh, when it agrees wholly with the affects of the spiritual law it is wholly spirit, which will be realised only when the body becomes spiritual in the resurrection. Therefore, in this sense the old and the new man relate to each other as the daybreak, which is neither fully darkness nor light, and which can be called either one. But following these two images (sickness – health; darkness – light) the whole man can also be said to love chastity and to be titillated by forbidden lusts. Thus it is one man who battles with himself, who wills and does not will.<sup>472</sup>

Furthermore as argued in the preceding chapters the distinctions between the spirit and the flesh are in the *Commentary on Galatians* as well firmly related to the nature of the love of the person.<sup>473</sup> The justified person lives internally for God through the law of love, guided and led in faith by spirit, which donates a joyful affect that spontaneously seeks to do good.<sup>474</sup> Therefore, the carnal and spiritual person can be distinguished by the cross (i.e., adversities), in which they will sense opposite things. The carnal person will burst out in hate and cry in the face of unpleasant occurrences, whereas the spiritual person will suffer in patience and work to do good for others.<sup>475</sup> However as neither flesh nor the

<sup>469</sup> WA 57, a88, 15-25; WA 57, a102, 5-18; a105, 7-19.

<sup>470</sup> WA 2, 584, 10 – 585, 7 with reference to *Contra Iulianum* III; *Contra Iulianum* VI and *Retractiones* I, XXIV. See also WA 2, 592, 4-21.

<sup>471</sup> WA 2, 497, 25 – 498, 9.

<sup>472</sup> WA 2, 585, 31 – 586, 23. See also WA 2, 588, 21 – 589, 13; WA 2, 610, 19-26. See also Vind 2010, 23-24.

<sup>473</sup> See chapters 2.4.1.2 and 2.4.1.3.

<sup>474</sup> WA 2, 498, 32-38; 587, 27 – 588, 20.

<sup>475</sup> WA 2, 578, 39 – 579, 16.

spirit is yet perfected in the Christian, the Christian will sense contrary things and experience an internal battle. Luther presents in the *Commentary on Galatians* the image of the mercy seat (*propitiatorium*) with the two Cherubim facing each other as the model of the Christian life. There, two contraries come together, just as the Christian is at the same time *simul iustus et peccator*. Although it is not stated explicitly, it seems obvious that the image carries a connection to Christology, as in the *Dictata* and the *Lectures on Hebrews* the mercy seat is explicitly employed as an image of the person of Christ, in whom the opposite natures meet. Thus Luther's theological anthropology follows the (for Luther important) *miraculous* nature of God's works, in which it is proper for God and divine wisdom to unite mutually opposite things in a way surpassing human wisdom.<sup>476</sup>

Of the other works examined in this study, the *Lectures on Hebrews* and *Operationes in Psalmos* contain very little material related to the *simul* anthropology. In the *Lectures on Hebrews* the Christian is defined as participating at the same time in the earthly and heavenly life and progressing from one to the other, so that these two lives of the flesh and of the spirit battle within the Christian: one must die for the other to live.<sup>477</sup> In the *Operationes in Psalmos* the concept of *simul* appears explicitly at least once, and is present implicitly when Luther discusses the dual effect of the word and Christian existence with respect to faith and love.<sup>478</sup> Neither work, however, discusses in any detail Luther's ideas concerning the composition of the Christian person.

One can conclude that the Christological analogy expressed in the *Lectures on Romans* remains Luther's most in-depth explanation of the relationship of the two natures of the Christian to each other. Though the focus of the analogy is on explaining the nature of the Christian as one who is at the same time both sinner and righteous, it also concerns the mutually exclusive and diverse ways the flesh and the spirit sense things. Therefore we can say that Luther's anthropology consists of multiple components. First, there is the natural tripartite composition, which contains several elements derived from the medieval Augustinian tradition. In this scheme Luther utilizes texts from Augustine himself, but alongside these the mystical tradition represented among others by Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, Jean Gerson and John Tauler appears to have had much influence especially with regard to the use of the image of the Tabernacle. Luther's most important contribution with regard to this tradition lies in his replacing the highest capacity with faith. The chronological development among the texts analysed in this study concerns here the place of the soul in the triad. Upon the tripartite natural composition Luther builds the bipartite distinction between flesh and spirit, which concerns the whole man as either carnal or spiritual. This distinction seems derive from Luther's interpretation of Paul, Augustine and his own theological innovation. The third component is the concept of person, which unites the last two anthropological frameworks within one subject, though its exact nature remains vague. The idea of the function of the concept of person is clearly expressed only in the *Lectures on Romans*, even though it seems to reflect the (for Luther) peculiar Christological mode of thinking, in which mutually opposite and contrary things

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<sup>476</sup> WA 2, 496, 35 – 497, 24. See also WA 55, II, 73, 11-18; WA 57, b189, 7-19; b201, 10 – b202, 8. See also chapter 2.2.4.3.

<sup>477</sup> WA 57, b98, 20-29; b222, 23 – 224, 15.

<sup>478</sup> WA 5, 564, 35 – 565, 13. See also AWA 2, 97, 12 – 98, 9; 101, 1-8; 299, 1 – 300, 17; 447, 1-23; WA 5, 407, 33 – 408, 13.

are brought together through Christological means. One can also suggest that Luther's introduction of the Christological and Trinitarian concept of person might be an expression of a turn in focus in the development of theological anthropology from the Medieval model of parts of the soul towards a more modern idea of the concept of person as a subject. Luther uses the concept of person as the conscious (but not necessary self-conscious) focus of experience, who observes, experiences and unites the experiences of the flesh, the spirit and their interaction. In this sense the concept of person is no longer defined first and foremost metaphysically, but refers more to individual subjectivity. The notion, however, remains rather undeveloped in the texts discussed here, as its major appearance is restricted to the *Lectures on Romans*.

### 3. Luther's Understanding of Faith

#### 3.1. The Question of the Light of Faith and the Intellect of Faith in Previous Research

The aim of the previous main chapter (chapter 2) was to form a picture of Luther's understanding of reality. The examination there of Luther's understanding of God, the universe and the human being argued that Luther's understanding of reality is related especially to the Augustinian tradition represented by the Victorines, Bonaventure and Gerson, both in its use of single terms and images as well as a whole. Especially interesting is the idea that being and understanding are understood by Luther as participation in the divine light. Luther's views suggest that one should attempt to examine from the basis of a realist ontology and epistemology of Platonist nature his understanding of faith as well. The doctrine of divine illumination has served as the epistemological foundation of the Augustinian School, to which Luther's doctrine shows strong signs of being connected. In the history of Luther research many scholars have noticed Luther's use of the concept "intellect of faith" (*intellectus fidei*) as well as the numerous places where Luther speaks of faith as a light. Nevertheless, besides Mannermaa's brief remarks in the article *Hat Luther eine trinitarische Ontologie?*<sup>479</sup> no scholar has engaged in a serious attempt to reconstruct, based on these texts, a realist epistemological theory following the Augustinian idea of illumination. This chapter aims to provide such reconstruction. By way of background, however, the following section will survey the subject of the most important studies that have until now been made on the nature of faith in Luther's thought, as well as discuss the newest interpretation of faith in Luther's theology offered by the Finnish School. The studies are examined insofar they have significance for Luther's understanding of faith.

Bengt Hägglund analyses Luther's concept of faith in his study *Theologie und Philosophie bei Luther und in der occamistischen Tradition: Luthers Stellung zur Theorie von der doppelten Wahrheit* (1955). As the title of the book suggests, about half of the work is dedicated to the relationship of philosophy and theology in general. In the latter half of the work, however, Hägglund analyses what he calls Luther's critique of the medieval concept of faith. There he examines the difference between Luther's and the Nominalists' use of the terms infused and acquired faith. Hägglund points out, that unlike for the Nominalists, for Luther the infused faith does not perfect acquired faith but stands in opposition to it, so that no bridge exists from nature to grace. Hägglund furthermore shows that Luther has a much more 'realist' understanding of infused faith than the Nominalists, in the sense that it is effective and active and really grasps and apprehends Christ as its object. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, Hägglund argues that this grasping and apprehension takes place through the Scripture (i.e., external word), which is the light of faith. Hägglund even quotes the principle (enunciated by Luther in WA 5, 118, 20) that the illuminating God and illuminated heart are one, but directly after that Hägglund defines, that faith comes only through the Word. In Hägglund's work there is,

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<sup>479</sup> Mannermaa 1993a; Mannermaa 1993b; Mannermaa 1994.

therefore, no deeper examination of the underlying ontology or epistemology of illumination. Rather he emphasizes the personal nature of faith: i.e., that it grasps what Christ has done pro me. According to Hägglund by means of this emphasis Luther rejects the concept of infused faith in general. Thus, for Hägglund, faith is not primarily knowledge (*notitia*), but steadfast trust (*fiducia*). As knowledge it is not objective and rational, but arises out of the experience of concrete life and prayer. This observation means that the content of faith is objective, but that it cannot be acquired by speculation, only by personal experience. However, faith cannot be defined only as experience, as sometimes experience is lacking or contrary. Rather, faith is trust arising from this experience, and thus it can be said to concern invisible things. In this sense faith is practical, not theoretical. It cannot be acquired by reason but through the word, which humbles and kills the reason. In this sense faith is in itself a higher understanding illuminated by the Holy Spirit, concerning invisible things which cannot be grasped with natural reason. Instead, it understands natural things better than reason alone. Thus, reason and faith can be considered as enemies but subjected to faith, reason also can have its role in theology.<sup>480</sup> Hägglund concludes his analysis by stating that unlike in Ockhamism, the relationship in Luther's thought between theology and philosophy, faith and reason, cannot be analysed epistemologically. Rather, faith is related to the general conception of existing (*Dasein*), which is created by faith.<sup>481</sup>

It is to be noted regarding Hägglund's interpretation that he does not distinguish clearly among Luther's texts from different periods. Moreover, although Hägglund examines the concept of infused faith only in the Nominalists, yet he claims that Luther's understanding of faith stands in contrast to the medieval concept of faith in general.<sup>482</sup> The scope of Hägglund's analysis is thus quite narrow, and even as he offers a realist conception of Luther's understanding of faith, he does not attempt to link it to specific epistemological theories. Rather, he sees Luther's understanding as an unique innovation that stands in contrast to the medieval concept of faith, although it utilizes specific traditional terms. The concept of illumination is interpreted metaphorically by Hägglund: i.e., the light is the Scripture. When illumination by the Holy Spirit is discussed, the specific nature of the concept remains vague.

Bernhard Lohse focuses on the concept of reason in his study *Ratio und Fides: Eine Untersuchung über die ratio in der Theologie Luthers* (1958), in contrast to Hägglund,. His thesis centers on the juxtaposition of faith and reason, from which Luther's negative attitude toward reason can in his opinion be explained. In his study Lohse appears to use the concepts *ratio* and *intellectus* somewhat interchangeably. Nevertheless, he notices that Luther can also use *intelligere* as a synonym of *credere* to signify faith. Although Lohse identifies the connection of the intellect to invisible things, he sees *intelligere* as signifying the act of faith in relation to actual knowledge. It is not to be understood as a capacity, but as referring to the act by which the human being believes the word of God.

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<sup>480</sup> See Hägglund 1955, 55-71; 82-86. Luther's statement "Idem enim est, et utrumque simul est, Deus illuminans et cor illuminatum" is discussed on p. 59.

<sup>481</sup> Hägglund 1955, 102.

<sup>482</sup> In my opinion Hägglund is right in the first respect, but in the second respect he examines the concept of infused faith from too narrow perspective: i.e., with regard to the Nominalists only. See chapter 3.5.1 and footnote 855.

Through this faith and understanding, the “human reason” is killed and a new understanding of faith achieved. Lohse even speaks about illumination of the reason (i.e., intellect) by faith, but by this he understands obedience to the Scripture. Through this illumination reason becomes an instrument of the word of God, and can be used in faith for good purposes.<sup>483</sup> For Lohse, the battle which ensues in the Christian between faith and reason is primarily a battle between the self-will of the Christian and the will of God, which the Christian does not always understand, and which goes against his or her selfish desires. The correlate of faith is not knowledge or understanding, but rather God’s promise.<sup>484</sup>

Thus also for Lohse the intellect of faith and the concept of illumination bear no specific metaphysical or epistemological meaning. Rather, they are used as metaphors for believing. According to Lohse, Luther has no interest in using epistemological theories to explain the knowledge of God. His interest is rather in the situation of the human being as a whole, who is turned away from God. Lohse surveys the cognitive capacities from the perspective of this general view, and thus Lohse describes Luther’s approach as existential. Lohse explicitly states that although a Christian can use reason in theological dialectics, one cannot understand this process in the sense of immediate illumination. It is rather the external word, which the Christian is captured to follow.<sup>485</sup>

Reinhard Schwarz analyses Luther’s concept of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity in Luther’s early writings up to 1518 in his work *Fides, Spes und Caritas beim Jungen Luther unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Mittelalterlichen Tradition* (1962). The foundational question of his work concerns the issue whether Luther remains within the medieval framework of habitual grace when he criticizes the Ockhamist understanding of grace and justification, and whether they are understood as gifts which create in the Christian anthropological capacities that make it possible for him to attain the highest religious possibilities and ends.<sup>486</sup> In the first chapter of the work Schwarz examines Luther’s comments on the Sentences of Peter Lombard. With regard to charity, Schwarz shows that Luther considers infused charity to be the Holy Spirit himself, not a created *habitus* which occupies a mediating position between God and the soul.<sup>487</sup> When analysing Lombard’s question regarding how an unformed faith (*fides informis*) is changed by the infusion of grace, Luther in Schwarz’s view states that by grace a new infused faith is given. That faith is indistinct from charity and works along with it, as the three theological virtues cannot be separated from each other. Schwarz, however, does not wish to define this unity ontologically, but phenomenally.<sup>488</sup> In his analysis of faith, Schwarz thus emphasizes faith as the foundation of hope, not taken in an ontological sense, but metaphorically, as affective recognition of and agreement with the preached word. Schwarz also examines Luther’s understanding of faith as *signum* in the sense of testimony, which is contrary to the definition of for example Lombard, for whom the word refers to the internal certitude of will given by grace. For Luther, the promised things are

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<sup>483</sup> Lohse 1958, 38-41; 98-100-104.

<sup>484</sup> Lohse 1958, 89-98.

<sup>485</sup> Lohse 1958, 42-43; 104-106; 114.

<sup>486</sup> Schwarz 1962, 1-4.

<sup>487</sup> Schwarz 1962, 12-40.

<sup>488</sup> Schwarz 1962, 40-49. Luther thus rejects the opinion of both Lombard and the Biel, according to whom the infused faith must be complemented by charity.



hiddenly present in the signs, which according to Schwarz constitute the basis for hope. In general, Schwarz emphasizes the existential or theological nature of faith in contrast to the physical and ontological. Faith does not provide a rational explanation of what a thing is, but confers significance upon it. It creates a new relation in the person to the objects of faith. According to Schwarz, Luther is not interested in the anthropological or psychological mode in which the things hoped for are present. Schwarz emphasizes that along with the concept of *habitus*, Luther also rejects the general notion of virtue. Luther, he argues, is interested in faith, hope and love only as actual acts of the person.<sup>489</sup>

In his second chapter Schwarz analyses the period of the *First Lectures on the Psalms*. First he analyses the concept of virtue in general, paying attention to the exegetical allegories used by Luther, such as the concept of beauty (*decor*, *pulchritudo*). Schwarz criticises Luther for using these allegories, because according to Schwarz the idea of the virtues as an ornament of the soul is connected to the idea of virtues as habitual qualities. However, he sees Luther as distancing himself from this idea and connecting the term *virtus* to the power of faith in which God acts. Schwarz also notes the distinction between intellectual and affective virtues. In general, however, by their orientation they are either carnal or spiritual, which demonstrates how they arise not out of free will, but out of an act of the Holy Spirit. For Luther, spirit, virtue and grace are essentially identical terms, according to Schwarz, that describe the actuality of the work of God in the human being. They are, however, to be distinguished from the essential power of God in himself (*virtus increata*). The effects of the power of God in human beings cannot be distinguished in relation to the different powers of the soul, but rather they constitute a range of phenomena caused by the actual presence (*Dasein*) of the works of God.<sup>490</sup> Schwarz also analyses the connection of the three powers of the soul (according to the Augustinian tradition) to the doctrine of the Trinity and the three virtues.<sup>491</sup> More fundamental for Luther, however, is the distinction of the intellect and the affect. Schwarz notes that Luther defines the “mind” as the “face” of the soul when it is turned towards God, stressing that only by actual knowledge does the mind become the face, and rejecting the idea that this term signifies an anthropological ‘part’. The knowledge of God is acquired when the person is existentially turned towards God by faith and love (i.e., intellect and affect). Schwarz notices Luther’s use of traditional expressions related to illumination of the intellect and warming of the affect, but does not draw conclusions about them. With regard to their relation to each other, he stresses the primacy of the intellect but emphasizes that faith and love cannot be made separate. Good works already flow from faith. Schwarz also notices in this connection Luther’s distinction between living and dead (or informed) faith (*fides mortua* or *informis*), but stresses that Luther does not understand them through the lens of the Scholastic *materia – forma* –scheme. In spiritual devotion the affect also can precede the intellect, and here Schwarz notes Luther’s connections to the Augustinian–Franciscan tradition represented by Bonaventure and Gerson. However, Schwarz especially sees Gerson as placing emphasis on affect alone, whereas for Luther the intellect is of greater importance. Nevertheless, Schwarz argues that the opposite train

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<sup>489</sup> Schwarz 1962, 50–66.

<sup>490</sup> Schwarz 1962, 76–98.

<sup>491</sup> Schwarz 1962, 98–117. As we have seen in chapter 2.4.1.1, however, these triads do not play a significant role in Luther’s anthropology.

of thought can also be found in some of Luther's texts, which demonstrates the existential nature of faith as trust and blind obedience.<sup>492</sup> With regard to the concept of the intellect, Schwarz sets against each other an Aristotelian understanding of intellect as human capacity, and what he calls a biblical concept of intellect as content of understanding. The theological intellect proceeds out of the *sensus Christi*, by which it receives content, to which the human being could not come to with his natural capabilities. Schwarz notes the connection of the intellect to invisible things, which stand as opposites of visible things, but are not abstracted from them. However, according to Schwarz Luther has no epistemological interest. Rather, the motivation for their opposition is the difference of faith with regard to the wisdom of the flesh. The theological intellect is attained through a change in self-understanding. The question is not of a change in psychological structure, but of an absolute contrast between two ways of observing and understanding. This understanding grows out of belief in Scripture and out of faith, as their result or fulfillment. Thus in Schwarz's interpretation Luther utilizes sentences of Augustine concerning faith and understanding, but departs from them and Scholastic ideas, abandoning the doctrine of *habitus* or an infused gift of the Spirit. Although faith can be described as illumination and seeing, this refers to the absolute change taking place in the human being. However, faith has future things as its object, things which it does not see clearly, because it does not yet possess them. Because of this, faith can also be described as hearing. Schwarz recognises that in illustrating this difference between faith and its future fulfilment, Luther uses terms from Neoplatonic mysticism, such as 'shadow' and 'enigma': God is present in the heart in the cloud of faith. This presence can also be called a light in relation to faith, but for the natural intellect it remains darkness veiled by the shadow of faith. Only faith can reach to the cognition of God, and Schwarz correctly notes that Luther rejects both the *via eminentiae* and the *via negationis*. He also notes Luther's use of the Tabernacle image. According to Schwarz, Luther uses the image of the first veil of the Tabernacle to illustrate the hiddenness of faith from carnal people, and the second veil to illustrate the hiddenness of their ground of existence (which is hidden in faith) from the faithful themselves. The intellect of faith thus stands in absolute opposition to all natural knowledge. It is knowledge of its own kind, not understood in terms of ontological dualism, but as an existential understanding oriented towards the future. Its content is understanding Christ as God by the proclamation of the word, so that Christ's life acquires special significance for the believer. It understands the saving deeds of God not metaphysically, but in their hiddenness in history. Therefore, faith does not offer any supernatural capabilities to the intellect. Rather, it rather shows the wisdom of the world to be stupidity. Faith allows the believer to perceive the salvific deeds of God (which are hidden under historical actions) by destroying the self-righteousness of the human being and freeing him for a new way of understanding his existence. It does not show objective good things, but changes the self-understanding of the person.<sup>493</sup> Correspondingly, Schwarz emphasizes in Luther's analysis of Hebr. 11:1 and Ps. 4:7 the definition of faith as a sign and indication of future things which have not yet become reality. He interprets the invisibility of the objects of faith as a reference to their being in the future. For Schwarz, faith is an active sign of the future, not to be understood through an objective

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<sup>492</sup> Schwarz 1962, 117-134.

<sup>493</sup> Schwarz 1962, 134-153.

ontological analogy between *signum* and *res*. In this connection Schwarz speaks about faith as a light which points to future things, but he in no way analyses the epistemological connotations of this expression. Also Schwarz (like the other German Scholars) sees this pointing as taking place through the word, which is a testimony of future things. Faith already possesses future things in the sense that it possesses the word. It is the substance of those things in the sense that the believer bases his existence on the word. Thus Schwarz argues that for Luther, the word “substance” has an existential, not an ontological meaning. Faith is the foundation of all virtues in this sense, not as a supernatural ontological reality, but as connected to a word which justifies and creates a new self-understanding.<sup>494</sup> Schwarz builds his analysis of the affect on emotional theory, but also distinguishes between the two basic orientations (spiritual and carnal) through which the emotions are connected to opposite objects. In deriving the affect from the object, Schwarz sees a parallel to the intellect of faith: for him neither are psychological capacities but terms describing the orientation of the person. This orientation, with regard to the affect, is changed by humiliation and confession of sin, by which the person is liberated from basing his existence on his self-will.<sup>495</sup> In his analysis of will (*voluntas*) and love (*caritas*), Schwarz again emphasizes, that by these terms Luther does not refer to certain potencies of the soul, or to infused habits, but to the orientation of the person and the effects of faith, which cannot be separated from it. The hope as a virtue is for Schwarz in the main identical with faith, but is more closely connected to the affect.<sup>496</sup>

In his third chapter Schwarz analyses the period of the exegesis of Paul (1515-1518). Schwarz argues that in this period Luther no longer employs the concept of *virtus*. In his opinion, the requirement that an infused virtue should exist along with the act (related to the virtue) was the greatest error of Nominalist theology. In Luther’s supposed rejection of the concept, Schwarz interprets Luther as attacking the whole of Scholastic theology. In Schwarz’s view, Luther replaces the concept of *virtus* with the idea of two ways of existing: *virtus hominum* and *virtus dei*. The Cross of Christ reveals the *virtus hominum* to be nothing: by faith a person can participate in the Gospel as the power (*virtus*) of God. That power does not become the property of man in an anthropological sense. It remains a power of God, which through the Gospel can change the existence of the human being. It is the active power through which God works. Thus according to Schwarz, Luther’s unified conception of the action of God allows him to leave behind the schema of the three virtues and their connection to the powers of the soul, as well as the distinction between intellect and affect. The psychological way of understanding their effect is abandoned. True faith is inseparably connected to love, not as a form which fills it but as a living power in and of itself, from which good works spring.<sup>497</sup> According to Schwarz, in the Pauline lectures faith consequently acquires a strong connection to the word, through which God is active and working. The relation to the word determines the existential self-understanding of the person, as well as the relation of God to the person. The word functions as the address (*Ansprache*) of God towards human beings, who are called to hear his judgements and promises. Their self-identification and position *coram deo* is

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<sup>494</sup> Schwarz 1962, 154-172.

<sup>495</sup> Schwarz 1962, 172-191.

<sup>496</sup> See Schwarz 1962, 191-240. These sections have little relevance for the concept of faith.

<sup>497</sup> Schwarz 1962, 241-259.

determined by how they receive this word: not by their powers of the soul and their ontological objects, but by their self-understanding and relation to God. The invisible and non-apparent things of faith now refer to things that are to be believed by the word (such as that we are sinners), not to any hidden metaphysical things. The objects of faith, moreover, are not just any general truths, but only such that touch the existence of the individual person and his situation before God and neighbour. The Christian life is no longer actualized as moral strife through the theological virtues towards beatitude and perfection, but as continuing confession of sin and hope of righteousness which is not attained in this life *in re*.<sup>498</sup> Justification is thus consequently attained through our judgement of ourselves as sinners, and of God as righteous. It is to be considered as *reputatio*, not an ontological change or transformation through infused grace. When Luther uses the latter concept of infused grace, it only refers to faith that is in us, and by which we consider God righteous. The same applies also to the interpretation of the *partim* aspect of sinfulness and righteousness. However, there is also a mystical and unitive aspect in Luther's thought. This aspect is the adhesion to the word, through which Christ and eternal goods are possessed. Those things are, however, possessed only by hearing of and obedience to the external word. They are hidden by it and not understood.<sup>499</sup> Schwarz also touches upon the question of the relation of the light of nature and light of grace in the context of his analysis of love. He correctly notes, that for Luther the two are opposed to each other as light and darkness. However, on the basis of this opposition Schwarz concludes, that the illumination of faith is not a supernatural quality, but an actual power which can be also described as charity, because it frees the person from his self-centeredness. Thus the lights are not cognitive opposites, but are related to the orientation of the person.<sup>500</sup>

As we can see, Schwarz constructs a beautiful story of how Luther in his understanding of faith departs step by step from the medieval concept of virtue. Unfortunately, the thread of this story is false: Luther continues to employ the notion of infused virtue in his works after the Pauline exegesis. Luther's *Disputation on Acquired and Infused Faith* (1520) is based on the notion of infused faith, and in the *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519-1521) the definition of faith, hope and love as infused, divine virtues plays a central role.<sup>501</sup> Schwarz's study thus aptly demonstrates the problem of focusing on select sources instead of examining the period of Luther's early lectures as a whole, i.e., up to *Operationes in Psalmos*. Moreover, although it is clear that Luther abandons the concept of *habitus* in his understanding of the theological virtues, this does not demonstrate (contra Schwarz) that Luther abandons the idea of the ontological inhabitation of grace and its connection to the anthropological capacities as a whole.

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<sup>498</sup> Schwarz 1962, 259-287.

<sup>499</sup> Schwarz 1962, 287-316.

<sup>500</sup> Schwarz 1962, 384-385. The analysis of the concept of hope as, well as the more general analysis of the concept of charity (in the connection of which Schwarz's observation is made) are here left aside, as they do not directly concern the concept of faith.

<sup>501</sup> Luther uses the concept of the infusion of grace even in the *Lectures on Romans* and *Lectures on Hebrews* (see WA 56, 379, 1-17 and WA 57, b79 gloss 3) although he does not explicitly specify that the content of the infusion are the virtues. However, in an analogous text in the *Operationes in Psalmos*, the infusion of grace is directly connected to the infusion of the theological virtues. See AWA 2, 283-321. See also the *Disputation on Acquired and Infused Faith* and its resolutions (WA 6, 83-98) and the analysis of the said disputation in chapter 3.5.1.

Schwarz reads Luther's emphasis on God's direct action in faith and grace as an expression of a relational and existential understanding of faith. However, the Schwarz's conclusions are better explained by noticing, that Luther rejects the concept of *habitus* (which he deems ontologically too weak) in order to replace it with the idea that the theological virtues are ontologically divine. This idea can be found in the *Operationes in Psalmos* and is in accord with Schwarz's finding according to which Luther considers infused charity to be the Holy Spirit himself. Instead of being interpreted existentially, Luther's emphasis on the direct action of God on the soul can be understood within a Platonist epistemology which rejects the Aristotelian concept of *habitus*. This mistake regarding the central concept of virtue does not, however, diminish the many merits of Schwarz's study in the details. As we can see in the individual chapters, many of his findings on the cognitive aspects of faith (e.g., with regard to the relation of light and darkness to spirit and flesh and the use of the Tabernacle image) are in themselves correct, even though the existential framework in which he interprets them is not.

In his 1964 work *Gelebter Glaube – Die Formierung reformatorischen Denkens in Luthers erster Psalmenvorlesung* Günther Metzger examines the affective dimension of faith. He notes, how Luther's rejects the concept of *habitus* already in his early comments to the Sentences. This rejection is connected, says Metzger, to a positive attitude towards Nominalism. Metzger notes also Luther's criticism of philosophical definitions.<sup>502</sup> Although Metzger focuses on the concept of affect and emphasizes its role in reading Scripture, especially the Psalms,<sup>503</sup> he nevertheless at the same time analyses the role of the intellect and their mutual relationships. In the Nominalist understanding the affect and the intellect form the main capacities of the rational soul, one connotating the soul as knowing, the other the motivating potency, although with regard to the substance the soul is one. Metzger notes Luther's frequent use of the paired concepts of "intellectus et affectus", which he sees as an indication of an emphasis on the unity of the person. Faith converts both (i.e., the whole person) towards God as the foundation of the person's existence, so that the distinction between the powers takes on a lesser importance. Metzger notes that "the illumination of faith" concerns the whole person in his totality. He does not, however, analyse this concept further, but states merely that faith is not only knowledge. In conclusion he states that Luther follows the idea of Nominalist psychology formally, but moves in the content of his theological thought in another direction. The Aristotelian idea of potencies and acts is completely missing in Luther, argues Metzger, and in its place Luther is interested in the orientation of the person.<sup>504</sup> In this context Metzger also analyses Luther's concept of *facies* and its related definition, in which Luther mentions Gerson and interprets the term as signifying existential orientation. For Luther faith seeing the face of God in Christ means, that Christ is the face in whom God turns towards us, and that this turning is recognized in faith, which signifies the relation human being has to God. Therefore, faith is, according to Metzger, not an activation of a potency; it is a relation, and Luther's way of thinking about the whole human being in this manner separates him from Gerson and the others, to whom he is formally connected. The

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<sup>502</sup> Metzger 1964, 39-47.

<sup>503</sup> Metzger 1964, 57-68.

<sup>504</sup> Metzger 1964, 69-74.

expression “with the whole intellect and affect” means that a human being should be freed from his own opinion (*Eigensinn*) and own will, for obedience to God in faith.<sup>505</sup>

Metzger also analyses the relationship between faith and intellect, as well as faith and affect. He notes that Luther often speaks of the invisible things as the object of theological knowledge. On the question of how their nature is to be understood, he refers to Hunzinger’s thesis, but rejects it, arguing that “the invisible” refers to understanding the relevance of the saving act of Christ. Nevertheless, Metzger admits that Luther was able to use also Pseudo-Dionysian vocabulary to illustrate his ideas. Metzger also notes that Luther speaks of the intellect as a gift of the Spirit, but rules out understanding this gift habitually or as supernatural knowledge. Rather, the intellect is faith (i.e., the content of faith) which is received from Scripture. Theological knowledge means personal encounter with the Christ event, which changes the existence of the one who understands. It is soteriological knowledge, and in this sense distinct from the natural and philosophical. It is passive, as in faith the human being is ‘seized’ (*ergriffen*) by God. In faith this “invisible” becomes the ground of concrete personal existence, not as ontological quality but as theological relation. Luther also speaks of faith as illumination, because in faith the human being realizes things about God and himself (i.e., sin) which a self-oriented person cannot. Illumination by faith always means the uncovering of sin, and thus it is a life-long process. Metzger explicitly denies that illumination means a special, higher form of experience of God. It is rather the enlightenment of the state in which the sinful person finds himself before God. It includes sin, but also knowledge that guilt is not the final word. Metzger also states that precisely because Luther connects illumination to faith, we can see that he does not mean any kind of ecstatic illuminationism. The same observation applies to the invisible things faith understands. They mean the changing of the existential self-understanding based on the salvific action of God in Christ. The contents of this illumination are tied to the content of Scripture. Nevertheless, faith in itself has no objective criteria but rather takes place *intus*. It is, however, connected to the hearing of the word. It is not yet *visio* and *res*; it is *fides* and *signum*.<sup>506</sup>

With regard to the relation of faith and affect, Metzger notes Luther’s positive use of the concept of affective knowledge. According to Metzger it is related to the contingent and concrete character of our life. Theological knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) is not only rational (*Wissen*), but must also be received existentially. Metzger notes the sections of Luther’s texts, in which he speaks of the precedence of the affect over the intellect.<sup>507</sup> He connects this precedence to the priority of hearing and obedience over understanding. The word has an effect on the whole man and his relations to the world, not only on some specific capacity of the soul. Only where life stays attached to the word is theological knowledge born, and faith can acquire an element of experience. Although this experience is not achieved through any special technique, Metzger agrees, that if the Christian life as a whole is understood as a meditation or encounter with the word, one can see parallels to the medieval idea of meditation in Luther’s use of the concept of affective knowledge.<sup>508</sup> Because of the emphasis on the whole person, Metzger concludes that Luther sets aside

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<sup>505</sup> Metzger 1964, 74-80.

<sup>506</sup> Metzger 1964, 69-74; 105-115.

<sup>507</sup> On these texts and how to understand them, see chapter 3.3.2.2.

<sup>508</sup> Metzger 1964, 115-121.

the ontological differentiations with regard to the concept of faith, and his focus becomes the concept of *credere* (i.e., to believe). By this concept Metzger understands the relation to God of the whole human being. Metzger argues that Luther has already in the *Dictata* detached the concept of faith from its intellectualist connotations. Faith has only Christ and his word as its authority. Its power comes from the word of Christ through the Scripture, and its focus is on the historical person of Christ (literal sense), his meaning for the existence of the believer (tropological sense) and for the existence of the Church in the world (allegorical sense). Faith is thus Christological, yet connected to the historical phenomenon that is the Church. It creates a personal bond to Christ and a new self-consciousness. Its place is sinful human existence, not nature elevated by grace. However, by faith the person now has access to God. Metzger thus concludes that Luther speaks about faith in the category of person, leaving behind ideas of infusion of grace and habits. According to Metzger, the distinction between infused and acquired faith is completely missing in Luther's thought. For Luther, faith is trust in God who has descended to human beings and in the midst of sin and flesh, as well as trust in his promise of salvation *pro nobis*. Faith is thankful trust that cannot be reduced to theological sentences, because it is existential and personal. It needs to be experienced and tested in the midst of life and in tribulation.<sup>509</sup>

Also in Metzger's work we see a typical example of the approach of the Ebeling School. Luther's actual texts are analysed thoroughly, but the starting point of the analysis is an existential perspective. From this approach results the conclusion that the anthropological, cognitive and mystical expressions of Luther are an expression of existential experience. Luther's expressions are interpreted from a given starting point, without paying attention to their content in its own right. Moreover, Metzger's study is once again plagued by its focus on one source alone, which leads Metzger to derive conclusions such as the claim that Luther does not utilize the concept of infused virtue.

One can see that the older studies of Hägglund, Lohse, Schwarz and Metzger are surprisingly united in their existential emphasis, which hinders the analysis of the connections between ontology and epistemology in Luther's thought, as that connection is already given in the foundational principles of each work. A very different critical approach is offered by Eero Huovinen, who in his work *Fides Infantium: Martin Luthers Lehre vom Kinderglauben* (1997) analyses Luther's conception of the faith of the child.<sup>510</sup> Huovinen notes a tension in the prior research on the topic, especially with regard to the question whether faith should be understood as a personal relation, or whether there is an ontological, passively received concept of infusion connected to faith.<sup>511</sup> To resolve this tension between these two views, Huovinen refers to Luther's concept of *duplex iustitia* or two kinds of righteousness. The first righteousness is Christ (the alien righteousness received passively) with whom the Christian is united in faith. The second righteousness is actual righteousness (understood as co-operation), which the indwelling of Christ in the Christian causes. The first righteousness is given in baptism, the second grows as a fruit of baptism. According to Huovinen, Luther's concept of faith can be understood as including both: i.e., the gift given, and the personal understanding of faith, which grows on the basis

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<sup>509</sup> Metzger 1964, 121-136.

<sup>510</sup> Huovinen 1997. The work was published first in Finnish in 1991. See Huovinen 1991.

<sup>511</sup> Huovinen 1997, 1-21.

of the first. The first righteousness is infused in baptism and is the faith which justifies. This discovery opens up the possibility of understanding the faith of the child on the basis of the idea of infusion. Infused faith is then contrasted with acquired faith, which a child does not yet have. This infused faith, which exceeds reason, is more perfect than any faith the person could acquire by the means of his or her own understanding.<sup>512</sup>

In the third chapter of his study Huovinen relates the notion of infused faith to the concept of sacrament. He criticizes the scholastic doctrine of *ponere obicem* for considering the efficacy of the sacrament as too weak. On one hand it is not enough for the reception of the sacrament not simply to set an obstacle (*ponere obicem*), but the sacrament must also be received in faith. However, it is the sacrament itself which also creates this faith: in baptism the baptized receives faith as an infusion and is united with Christ.<sup>513</sup> This view is connected on one hand to the conviction, that reason is not required to receive faith, as faith is rather over and against reason, and on the other hand to the conviction, that the word of God is effective in and of itself. It is not simply an existential *Anrede*, but a creative word through which a child receives his or her own proper faith. The child is rather better equipped to receive faith than an adult, because he or she does not yet possess reason that resists faith. Huovinen also emphasizes the hidden character of faith. According to him, faith, first of all, is often hidden from the believer himself. It is also hidden because it is not perceptible by others. Faith is not to be understood as actual reasoning in the sense that, for example, a sleeping person would not then possess faith. However, an adult may also have that kind of faith and self-knowledge, but it is secondary in relation to the gift of faith itself. That faith is hidden in the heart and cannot be perceived externally. Huovinen also stresses that this kind of understanding of faith has as a consequence that the understanding of the grammatical content of the preached word is not a requirement for the birth of faith. The word is effective even when it is not understood, and creates spiritual understanding in the hearer. The understanding is thus not a requirement for the reception of the word, but is its possible result. The external word is required as a vehicle, but the actual understanding comes from the internal word. However, this internal word is not given apart from the external.<sup>514</sup>

In his fifth chapter Huovinen thoroughly analyses Luther's use and reception of the concept of *fides infusa*. He notes studies taking a negative attitude toward the concept, even though it is accepted generally that Luther uses the term. According to Huovinen this issue has been examined completely insufficiently given the central importance of the idea. Huovinen argues that many theologians who have opposed the concept have passed over central sections of Luther's writings containing the term. Huovinen rejects the claim that *fides infusa* is for Luther merely an anthropological term which excludes the relation to its object. Rather, he emphasizes that Luther uses the term of faith which comprehends Christ. He also notes in the work of some scholars the apparent conceptual confusion between the concepts of *fides infusa* and *fides caritate formata* and how these are identified with the *habitus* doctrine, from which they are in reality distinct. Criticism of the idea of habit does not necessarily imply the rejection of the idea of *fides infusa*. Luther's criticism is directed toward the idea that faith has to be informed by love in order

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<sup>512</sup> Huovinen 1997, 23-43.

<sup>513</sup> Huovinen 1997, 45-74.

<sup>514</sup> Huovinen 1997, 75-121.



to be justifying, not toward the idea that faith itself is infused. In actuality, Luther defends the idea of infused faith when it is understood in a strong enough sense, not merely as an idle quality. Luther's aim is to reject the scholastic idea that infused faith is merely one 'degree' of faith which should be complemented by something else. Luther rather sets side by side acquired faith (which he criticizes) and infused faith (which is true faith). Infused faith not only is the perfecter of acquired faith, but is rather, "everything". Infused faith does not require for its foundation an acquired faith which is the act of the human being, nor does it require being complemented by love. According to Huovinen, it is neither a supernatural habit nor a virtue towards which one can dispose oneself by natural means. It is a gift infused by the Holy Spirit in the human being, a gift which is itself justifying faith. The idea of infused faith thus expresses the notion that justification comes from outside (*ab extra*), but happens in us (*in nobis*). It becomes a new reality and form in the human being, a new reality which is the source and foundation of all good.<sup>515</sup> The faith of the child is just this infused faith, but in time it grows to become comprehensible, as it is effective and powerful in itself. This idea of growth is illustrated by example of a child kidnapped by the Turks, whom faith (according to Luther) teaches internally.<sup>516</sup> This is analogous to the efficacy of the sacrament. Infused grace is not a weak and ineffective quality, but rather one that saves and makes holy, a gift of God received internally. Huovinen stresses that although this gift is not to be understood as a habit, and although it does not become the property of the human being, it is nevertheless real participation in Christ's alien righteousness and a real union between Christ and the believer. This participation is effected in baptism and realized in the everyday life of the Christian, in which he or she must live a new life and fight against sin. Thus the regeneration effected by baptism is a result of the faith given in baptism. The infused faith given in baptism, which justifies, thus also constitutes the beginning of the second righteousness of the Christian, creating new affects in the Christian.<sup>517</sup>

As we can see, Huovinen's study differs greatly from the interpretations of Luther's understanding of faith offered by existentialist researchers. Huovinen emphasizes real union with Christ and shows that the concept of infused faith plays a major role in Luther's thought. Nevertheless, most probably due to the emphasis of the study on the faith of the child, the cognitive nature of faith remains almost. Huovinen notes the idea that faith is opposed to reason, but does not attempt to clarify their relationship. Along with the existentialists he shows little interest in the relation of faith to the anthropological capacities. Concepts such as illumination are left outside of the scope of Huovinen's study.

Olli-Pekka Vainio presents the latest views of the Finnish School in his article "Faith" in the 2010 work *Engaging Luther: A (New) Theological Assessment*. He begins his article with the question of why faith justifies. Vainio distinguishes between the victory of Christ over the power over sin and death in the action of Christ, and the application of his merit, which is received by believers in the "happy exchange" (*commercium admirabile*) effected through ontological participation in the person of Christ. Belief in Christ brings forth this union. Therefore, faith requires as its content both the cognitively understood

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<sup>515</sup> Huovinen 1997, 123-134.

<sup>516</sup> See the analysis of the idea in chapter 3.5.1.

<sup>517</sup> Huovinen 1997, 134-161.

information about what Christ has done for human beings (*gratia*) as well as Christ himself as the gift (*donum*). According to Vainio the participation in Christ's merit is described by Luther by the means of the concept of "apprehending Christ" (*apprehendere Christum*). Behind the Latin word *apprehendere* lies the distinction between appetitive and apprehensive faculties, the latter connected to knowledge and understanding. According to Vainio, *apprehendo* means as well for Luther intellectual apprehension and comprehension, but in a special way: the object of knowledge becomes the property of the knowing subject. Faith evoked by the Gospel grasps and possesses (*apprehendit*) Christ. Vainio suggests that the mode of this apprehension is to be understood in terms of realist Aristotelian epistemology. Central to it is the concept of form, which in knowing is transferred into the knower, although it also remains in the object which is known. Luther interprets this apprehension theologically: when the intellect focuses on Christ in the Gospel, it apprehends Christ so that he becomes the form of the human intellect, not only as *species* (i.e., representation of the object), but as himself. Thus faith becomes an essentially divine act in the human person. In this union the corrupted will is also annihilated and created anew by Christ, with the result that the appetitive and apprehensive faculties merge. In faith, Christ becomes not only the object of faith, but also the subject, becoming a new reality in the human being. Besides using this Aristotelian theory to explain the nature of faith Vainio notes that faith as a salvific act ultimately eludes exact definition. Luther uses mystical language and multiple biblical metaphors to explain the act of faith.<sup>518</sup>

Vainio continues his discussion with the statement that faith also unites with God (who is love). He points out that Luther nevertheless criticizes the medieval idea of the *ordo caritatis*, whereby human love is naturally inclined towards God as the highest good (*summum bonum*). As human love is corrupted by evil desire, it may lead away from God and be contrary to him. Moreover, this idea makes faith secondary to salvation, whereas Vainio points to Luther's texts in which he rejects the concept of *fides caritate formata*, arguing that the formal righteousness of a Christian is not love which forms faith, but is Christ himself present in faith. However, Christian faith in the authentic Lutheran sense unites with God who is love, and in this sense faith means also union with the divine love. Love is not a human endeavor by which one reaches to heaven, but a result of participation in Christ, a result which enables good works. It is not a medium of salvation, because Christ alone is sufficient.<sup>519</sup> Vainio then discusses whether one can speak about growth in grace and active spirituality. Justification cannot, he says, be considered mere reputation, because it involves participation in Christ. As a result, the person becomes a new creature (*nova creatura*) in such a way that something changes in the person. Justification and sanctification must be kept together, as Christ is the source of both. The renewal cannot, however, be considered a meritorious act because it is a form of participation in God's love. The Christian, who has been changed by God, can now perform good deeds in the sight of God. However, this renewal is always limited, and the Christian also needs the imputation of alien righteousness until death. Although the Christian is simultaneously sinful and righteous, with regard to its partial aspect the

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<sup>518</sup> Vainio 2010, 138-143.

<sup>519</sup> Vainio 2010, 143-147.

righteousness can grow. This growth happens through participation in Christ in faith, as well as through participation in the sacramental life of the Church.<sup>520</sup>

Vainio outlines a fairly balanced view of the life of the Christian. The limitation of his discussion (caused at least to some extent by the relatively short length of his article) is that Vainio approaches the cognitive aspect of faith only from the perspective of the Aristotelian theory of apprehension. This limitation is also partially explained by Vainio's sources, as he primarily utilizes the second *Commentary on Galatians* from 1535. Though this particular viewpoint can be found in Luther's writings, it does not seem to be the principal theory Luther uses to illustrate the cognitive nature of faith. It does not, for example, explain the multiple passages in which Luther speaks about the divine light of faith. Vainio also refers to the mystical language and metaphors used by Luther in one sentence, but does not examine the issue further. The analysis offered by Vainio therefore needs to be complemented by a comprehensive study, which takes into account the variety of Luther's viewpoints.

The foregoing analysis of the most important studies on Luther's concept of faith as well as some of the recent scholarship shows that until now no serious study has been attempted, which analyses Luther's understanding of faith from a viewpoint of a realist ontology and epistemology. The Finnish research has suggested that such a theory lies behind Luther's thought, but apart from individual articles and monographs focused on specific elements of the concept of faith (such as the faith of the child, or the union with Christ in faith) to date there has not been an attempt to construct such a theory as a whole. The objective of this main chapter is to undertake such an analysis, with the doctrine of illumination as the conceptual and historical background. After this first subchapter on history of the scholarship, the second subchapter examines Luther's relation to the tradition of divine illumination in general (chapter 3.2). The third subchapter focuses on the functions of the light of faith in Luther's thought (chapter 3.3). The fourth subchapter discusses the role of faith as the enigmatic middle stage between the earthly and the heavenly vision (chapter 3.4). The fifth and final subchapter examines the question of the nature of faith as beliefs and trust (chapter 3.5).

## **3.2. Luther's Relation to the Tradition of Divine Illumination**

### **3.2.1. The General Development of the Theory from Augustine to the Nominalists**

As already indicated in the previous chapter, Luther's understanding of faith is decidedly connected to the doctrine of illumination. By divine illumination is meant the idea that the human mind receives knowledge through being illuminated by a divine, intellectual light. The doctrine appears in Augustine as a Christian interpretation of Plato's idea of recollection (*anamnesis*), but it also incorporates Biblical and Neoplatonic motifs about the nature of light and the nature of God. The general purpose of the doctrine is to give an

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<sup>520</sup> Vainio 2010, 147-154.

account of how the soul can know immutable ideas or forms, and recognize them in the data provided by the senses. However, the doctrine also serves a theological purpose. The idea that it is exactly Christ, who is the divine light of understanding or intellect integrates epistemology and Christology. There are, however, various interpretations of the precise nature of this doctrine both in Augustine and in the thought of its later proponents, both with regard to the function and to the theological purpose of the doctrine. One can distinguish between an *epistemic function* and a *noetic function*. In the first case, the doctrine serves as an explanation for how the soul can understand language and other signs unambiguously as well as make judgements (illumination as a guarantee of certitude). In the second case, the doctrine serves as an account of concept formation (i.e., how the soul receives certain ideas, which it would seem not to be able to abstract from sense perception alone).<sup>521</sup>

Connected to these questions also are different interpretations of the doctrine in the history of theology. According to Thomist and formal interpretation, illumination functions not as a direct source of any ideas, but gives the human being a general capacity of abstraction (Thomist view), or serves as a criterion of the ideas of the mind (formal view). On the contrary, according to Early Franciscan (Bonaventure among others) and so-called ontologist interpretation, illumination gives the human mind a direct contact with the divine ideas, which reside in the divine essence. However, this interpretation has been criticized by Thomists, the later nominalist Franciscans and Neo-Thomists on the grounds that it would make the vision of God the property of any mind. If one were to support an ontologist understanding of illumination, according to this criticism one would have to give a credible explanation of how the knowledge of ideas or of God received by illumination, and the knowledge of God in the beatific vision or mystical rapture differ from each other.<sup>522</sup>

However, there is yet another way to view the function of the doctrine. In the history of philosophy, the doctrine is often discussed from the viewpoint of *general epistemology*,

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<sup>521</sup> See Gilson 1934, 322-323; Markus 1967, 364-368; Wienbruch 1971; Detloff 1986, 140-145; Matthews 2001, 180-181; Marrone 2001, 21; Nash 2003, 77-93; Pasnau 2011. Schumacher 2011, 4 lists five functions of illumination in Augustine: source of the cognitive capacity, cognitive content, help with the process of cognition, certitude, and knowledge of God. Marrone 2001, 33-34; 252 lists four: The question of judgement; ideogenesis or the question of concepts and how the divine light inserts them into the mind; the specific issue of explaining immutable truth; and the matter of the mind's journey to God. Nash discusses the same questions in his examination of the Franciscan view (illumination as source of ideas) and formal view (illumination as source of certitude), and rejects the formal view.

<sup>522</sup> E.g., Ivánka 1964, 214-215 criticizes Augustine for intermingling normal cognition and knowledge of God, so that the knowledge of abstract truths is equated with the knowledge of God and normal knowledge becomes equal to the *visio beatifica*. Gilson 1961, 78-81, on the contrary, argues that Augustine strictly separates the light and its source (i.e., God). According to him, illumination as a term is only a metaphor about God as the source of all Creation. The natural light of reason is related to the divine light only as a created light. Nash 2003, 94-124 discusses the above four views (Thomist, Franciscan, formal, ontologist), defending the ontologist interpretation of Augustine and attacking especially Gilson's Neo-Thomist interpretation. For an overview of different interpretations of illumination both historical and modern, see Schumacher 2011, 7-24. The difference between these views is related to two different ways of understanding the function of the doctrine, which Schumacher defines as 1) the interpretation that "the divine light simply imparts an intrinsic cognitive capacity to form ideas in the way Aristotle described" and 2) the interpretations which "define illumination in one way or another as an extrinsic influence, or as a force that is super-added to the cognitive capacity", the latter obviously being more open to special knowledge of God.

as an explanation of how the act of apprehending any truth whatsoever happens. In this case, the theological doctrine of illumination serves as a justification for epistemology in general. (This seems to be the view of, among others, Augustine and Bonaventure, as well as of Thomas Aquinas regarding the light of the natural reason). Another interpretation, however, is to read the doctrine as the basis of *theological epistemology*, whereby the idea of divine illumination serves as an explanation of how immediate, direct and intimate knowledge of God, or the knowledge of the truth of some theological dogmas which exceed reason, is possible. In this case, illumination concerns a limited area of theological knowledge, not all intellection. (This seems to be the view of Hugh of St. Victor, of Thomas Aquinas regarding the light of faith, as well as of the Nominalists who assign a role to special illumination. In addition, many post-Reformation theologians, such as Luther and Calvin, seem to fall into this category).<sup>523</sup> These two interpretations are also related to the question of how the Augustinian concept of the human being as the image of God is understood. One can either read Augustine to mean, that the human being with regard to his higher mind is the image of God in general: that is, every human being is an image of God on account of his rationality. Or, one can interpret Augustine to mean, that because the divine reflection in the human mind constitutes the image of God, a human being is an image of God only insofar he or she is turned towards the the divine light with his or her mind, and reflects it.<sup>524</sup>

In the West, in the Early Middle Ages the theory of illumination was widely received and accepted as an epistemological theory. The formation of the Scholastic schools in 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries led to the precisising of theological doctrines. This was also the case with the doctrine of illumination, which was given formulation especially in the Franciscan School, above all in the theology of Bonaventure.<sup>525</sup> Bonaventure considers divine illumination a necessary condition of all true knowledge due to the mutability and fallibility of the human subject, in contrast to the immutable and infallible nature of the knowledge of God. According to Bonaventure, by illumination the higher part of the mind receives the divine exemplar (idea, concept) as the regulating and motivating principle of knowledge. The content of the illumination is not the sole principle of knowledge (because often sense data is involved), but the principle which guarantees the immutability of the object known (i.e., the idea, concept or exemplar derived), and the infallibility of the knower (because natural light can err, but the divine light which is involved in the process is inerrant). And precisely with regard to the illumination it receives the soul is an image of God. Primary among these divine exemplars are the concepts of being and goodness, the knowledge of which demonstrates (as Bonaventure argues in his *Itinerarium*) how the soul must intuitively know God as the foundation of all thought. The soul, however, does not see the eternal reasons clearly, fully and distinctly as it still lives in this life and not in the heavenly vision; it only sees them to the degree of its conformity with God. Furthermore, according to Bonaventure the divine light received can be divided into 1)

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<sup>523</sup>For example, White 2001 distinguishes between natural illumination, which is involved in all knowledge, and supernatural illumination, which takes place by infusion of the light of faith and has God as its object, already in Augustine and Bonaventure.

<sup>524</sup>See Matthews 2001, 182-185; Mulligan 1955, 2-8; Detloff 1986, 145-146.

<sup>525</sup>On the general development of the theory, see Owens 1982; Doyle 1984; Marrone 2001; Pasnau 2011; Schumacher 2011. Hägglund 1955, 22-26 provides a good general overview and comparison of the Augustinian, Thomist and Ockhamist interpretations with an accent on the Ockhamist tradition.

exterior light (i.e., the light reflected in the *vestigia* of the creation); 2) interior light (i.e., the light impressed in the mind as the *imago Dei*); and 3) superior light (i.e., when the mind, by the image impressed in it, turns towards the source of that light, God, who is the superior light). These three lights are related to the spiritual ascent and their distinction reflects the orientation of the person. Even the wayfarer can contemplate God in the divine light itself (*in ipsa luce*), at least partially and incipiently.<sup>526</sup>

The Early Franciscan interpretation of illumination, however, soon was challenged by the emerging Aristotelian philosophy and its focus on sense perception. Aristotelian ideas were synthesized with Christian theology in the thought of the Dominican School, above all in the theology of Thomas Aquinas. Accordingly, Thomas replaces external divine illumination with the idea of the intellect having its own natural light, with which it abstracts ideas from the sensory phantasms. This light is, nevertheless, related to the divine light. Thomas understands the natural light of reason as an imprint and created likeness of the divine light, and as such it is the *imago Dei* in the human person. These medieval developments resulted in the one divine light being divided into different lights of different degrees, as can be seen already in Bonaventure. In Thomas, the scheme of dividing the divine light becomes 1) the natural light of reason; 2) the light of faith or grace; and 3) the light of glory. Thus the distinction Bonaventure draws between the stages of contemplation is replaced by Thomas with a distinction among the three stages of human life: that of the unbeliever (natural light), the Church Militant (light of faith/grace) and the Church Triumphant (light of glory). Thomas reserves the immediacy of the divine light of Augustine and Bonaventure only to the light of glory. For Thomas only the light of glory confers a cognition of God in his essence, cognition attained only in the future life. The light of faith, on the other hand, confers only a mediated knowledge of God. It either strengthens the natural light, receives divinely-formed sensual images (but not intellectual forms), or grants the ability to trust in propositions given in revelation and to be oriented to the future life through them. The light of reason represents only for the general capacity of abstraction and does not in itself serve as a basis for orienting the person towards God.<sup>527</sup>

Due to certain inherent philosophical issues, the doctrine of illumination as a whole came to be contested. Gradually it was abandoned as a general epistemological theory. This, surprisingly, took place within the Franciscan School. Peter Olivi criticizes the theory of ontologism, for mixing the natural and supernatural modes of knowledge, as well as for being insufficient as a guarantee of the certitude of knowledge. Olivi argues that rather than to illumination, infallibility should be attributed to the human mind itself. Despite his criticism, however, Olivi approves of illumination as a source of theological knowledge (knowledge of God).<sup>528</sup> Henry of Ghent reacts to Olivi's criticism by distinguishing between the natural cognition of natural objects and the supernatural

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<sup>526</sup> Bonaventure's theory can be found in condensed form at the conclusion of book IV of the *Questiones disputate de scientia Christi*. See also *Itinerarium* II-V; on the three lights see *Itinerarium* VII, 1; Scarpelli 2007; Schumacher 2011, 141-143.

<sup>527</sup> Schumacher 2011 challenges the traditional view according to which the Franciscan School and Bonaventure represent a faithfully Augustinian doctrine, which she reviews on pages 14-16. She argues instead for a Thomistic reading of Augustine. On the relationship of the three lights in Thomas Aquinas, see Sth I q 12; Ia IIae q 109 a 1 and Winkler 2013, 204-223.

<sup>528</sup> Schumacher 2011, 181-186.

cognition of objects that can only be known supernaturally by special divine illumination. Henry admits that natural knowledge of natural objects is obscure and hazy. Pure, infallible knowledge (pure truth) is only possible by means of special illumination, through which the mind knows the foundational exemplars. These exemplars function as kind of a check with regard to the truth of the exemplars acquired by natural cognition. Thus Peter and Henry narrow the scope of the theory of illumination, so that it no longer applies to all knowledge. In his interpretation of the light of faith, Henry seems to verge on that of Aquinas. Henry argues, that the light is to be understood not as comprehension of the theological objects of faith, but as assent to propositions, the reality behind which is not understood. However, Henry construes a theory of a higher medium light (*lumen medium*) between the light of faith and the light of glory, a light which allows a more thorough grasp of and comprehension of the objects of theological doctrine. This light comes closer to the immediacy of the light in Bonaventure.<sup>529</sup>

Duns Scotus is the Franciscan commonly known for eliminating the doctrine of divine illumination as a credible foundation of general epistemology. Scotus rejects the supporting arguments of Henry. The position of Scotus can be summarized in the statement that if any certitude is to be obtainable at all, the objects of knowledge must be inherently intelligible, and the mind must be naturally equipped to perceive intelligibility. If the mind does not possess natural competence for recognizing truth, it cannot know anything with certainty: if an element in the process is fallible, then the entire process is fallible. Scotus therefore attempts to prove the intelligibility of the objects of knowledge and the infallibility of the knower by turning to a univocal concept of being. According to this concept the divine being and the created beings exist in the same way (i.e., immutably). The only difference between them is the degree of being, which in God is infinite and in the creatures, finite. Scotus reinterprets the Augustinian concept of illumination as a doctrine of the univocity of being: the divine light permeates reality and makes objects exist in an immutable mode of being, in which they become manifestly knowable.<sup>530</sup> Thus illumination is not a property of the subject, but is 'applied' to reality to confer on it the nature of immutability which Bonaventure attributes to the divine light. Moreover, Scotus defines knowledge of the transcendentals as something that comes not from divine illumination, but which is a natural feature of the mind. Furthermore, Scotus distinguishes among four kinds of knowledge: self-evident principles known by means of themselves (*per se nota*); inductive knowledge; introspective knowledge and sensory

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<sup>529</sup> Schumacher 2011, 186-191. See also Henry of Ghent: *Summa Questionum Ordinariorum*, a 1 q 2. On the *lumen medium* and the three other lights in Henry of Ghent, see Työrinoja 2000.

<sup>530</sup> See *Ordinatio* I dist. 3 pars 1 q 4, nro 262-263. The concept of univocity stands against both the Thomistic concept of analogy of being and the Pseudo-Dionysian, apophatic or mystical concept of the superessential nature of divine being. Both reject the univocal application of terms to the divine nature, i.e., the idea that terms carry the same meaning when applied to God and to created beings. (Cf. *Ordinatio* I dist. 3 pars 1 q 1-2, nro 10; nro 26-27). The Scotist and, later, Ockhamist developments lead to the result that the incomprehensibility of God is no longer understood in ontological terms and with regard to the simplicity of the divine being, but rather with regard to the freedom of the divine will. Thus the acceptance of the principle of univocity leads also to a rejection of mystical epistemology based on the idea that in the immediate mystical contact with the divine, the conceptional boundary between human cognition and divine being is transcended. The relationship to and union with God is no longer understood in epistemological terms, but in terms of love and will: one's will is united with the will and directives of God. Accordingly, Nominalist mysticism is commonly considered a mysticism of love rather than mysticism of knowledge.

knowledge; as well as between two kinds of cognition: abstractive and intuitive. For Scotus, the perfect form of cognition is the intuitive cognition of a present object, because unlike abstractive cognition, intuitive cognition involves knowledge of the actual existence of an object. The capacity for intuitive cognition predisposes the human being to the immediate knowledge of God. However, according to Scotus, that knowledge is only attained in the future life. Scotus nevertheless agrees that in this life there may be need for supernatural knowledge or knowledge of God by special illumination, which is the only possible proof for certain theological truths.<sup>531</sup>

The distinction between abstractive and intuitive cognition introduced by Scotus forms one of the most important aspects of the epistemology of the followers of the *via moderna*, the theological school which includes both the voluntarist Scotus as well as the later Nominalists such as William of Ockham and Gabriel Biel.<sup>532</sup> The theology of these authors rejects the intellectual mysticism of the Augustinian-Bonaventurean tradition, as they view immediate (i.e., intuitive) cognition of God as a present object as being excluded in this life and only admitted as taking place in the beatific vision. Consequently, besides certain theological truths evident to reason, the relationship to God becomes something which is actualized through will and love, not intellect. The nominalist *pactum* theology and its emphasis on justification by *facere quod in se est* reflect this view. The concept of authority comes to the foreground and faith is consequently defined as the acceptance in the intellect of doctrinal propositions (*fides qua*) with which the will agrees (*fides quae*), received through preaching (*fides acquisita*) and applied to the individual (*pro nobis*). Although the notion of supernaturally infused faith (*fides infusa*) is still sometimes employed within Nominalism, it is considered unnecessary. It is understood by the Nominalists as an *infused habit* which inclines the intellect to accept revealed truths, not any longer as an immediate cognition of the divine. Thus the development begun in Thomism leads especially in Scotism and Nominalism to the result that God is no longer considered the object of immediate theological knowledge. Faith is understood as an assent of the will to propositions given by doctrinal authority.<sup>533</sup>

Unlike as is often claimed,<sup>534</sup> the concept of divine illumination did not, however, completely disappear from academic theology alongside the rise of Nominalism.<sup>535</sup> This

<sup>531</sup> Schumacher 2011, 194-201; Pasnau 2011.

<sup>532</sup> Scotus can be considered also a representative of the *via antiqua* for the sake of his realist ontology, but here I use his epistemology as the point of differentiation. That which pertains to the definition of an Augustinian school is true also here with regard to the definition of a school in general. To some extent, the concept is applied *a posteriori* so that a certain school cannot be considered as a single whole, but here the concept is rather used to highlight features in which there is distinct continuity.

<sup>533</sup> See Biel: *Collectorium circa quatuor libros Sententiarum* I q 1 art 3 conclusio; Oberman 1963, 68-80; Hägglund 1955, 27-40; 71-82. A contrary view is represented by Metzger 1964, 122-125, who notes on p. 123 that acquired faith is the foundation of the act of faith, but that it has to be complemented by infused faith to become meritorious. However, on p. 124 Metzger attributes this merit to love, so that his analysis seems to confuse the concept of infused faith with faith informed by love.

<sup>534</sup> Pasnau 2011; Marrone 2001.

<sup>535</sup> Schumacher 2011 is right in criticizing previous research for its narrow focus on philosophy, which has resulted in the omission of the examination of the doctrine of illumination in its theological context. With the coming of the *via moderna*, the doctrine of illumination disappears in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century as a general epistemological theory. After this time its later development is not followed in the compendia of the history of philosophy. Nevertheless, it continues to persist in the works of mystical authors, as will be demonstrated below. The same view is held by Boler 1982, 462 (footnote 8).



can be seen in the thought of Jean Gerson among others. The theology of Gerson is usually described as a Nominalist mysticism in which the mysticism is that of love and will, not of the intellect. If any intuitive cognition of God takes place in this life, according to this view it is accepted only in the most extraordinary cases such as the rapture of St. Paul (2. Cor. 12).<sup>536</sup> However, when one examines the sources, it becomes exceedingly clear that Gerson accepts the doctrine of divine illumination. He seems to accept the possibility of intuitive cognition of God in this life as well, although that is less clear. One can find in Gerson's writings multiple instances of texts which speak of illumination by divine light. A good example of this are his *lectiones Contra vanam curiositatem*, intended to be read before his treatise on *Mystical theology*. In *Contra vanam curiositatem* Gerson mounts a fierce attack against Duns Scotus while simultaneously praising Bonaventure. Following Bonaventure, Gerson states that God is the best object that can be thought of, and that this revelation is the basis of the natural knowledge of God, which is the light of the face of God sealed (*signatum*)<sup>537</sup> in the human beings, in accordance with and with explicit reference to Bonaventure's *Itinerarium*.<sup>538</sup> Gerson also speaks about different lights which the soul receives: corporeal, spiritual and the light of faith. These correspond to three parts of the soul: sensuality, reason and the *intelligentia simplex*. According to Gerson, it is above all by the divine light (*lumen divinum*) of faith coming from above that the face of God is sealed on the soul, although all three lights are related to the knowledge of God in a lessening degree.<sup>539</sup> Gerson also speaks about divine illumination in the work *De vita spirituali animae*, where he states that the principles of the natural law are derived from divine law and are known through immediate irradiation by the divine light. Here also Gerson refers to Bonaventure's *Itinerarium* and to Augustine.<sup>540</sup> Thus it is clear that Gerson builds upon the earlier texts which employ the idea of divine illumination, and that he continues to argue for the tradition and against Scotus.

Further evidence of Gerson's relation to the epistemology of Nominalism appears in his treatise *De oculo*, which discusses ways of seeing. In this short text Gerson distinguishes between three different types of mental vision of God, later adding also a

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<sup>536</sup> See Oberman 1963, 326-340; Fisher 2006, 216-239. In recent studies, Oberman's characterization of Gerson as a Nominalist has been criticized. According to Brett 1997, 77-78 rather than being a Nominalist, Gerson seems to use many different medieval sources in an eclectic manner, a view with which I tend to agree. The amount of literature available on the mystical theology of Gerson is regrettably somewhat limited, the most extensive study being that of Combes 1963-Combes 1964 (*La théologie mystique de Gerson*) and the most recent comprehensive work being Vial 2006 (*Jean Gerson théoricien de la théologie mystique*).

<sup>537</sup> The use of this term stems from Ps. 4:7, "signatum est super nos lumen vultus Dei", which is a key biblical passage for the tradition of divine illumination. In the interpretation of the sentence, the focus is sometimes on the idea of making an imprint or a mark of the seal upon the soul, and at other times on the content of the light being sealed (i.e., concealed) and superior to the soul.

<sup>538</sup> DP I, 91 (*Contra vanam curiositatem*, Prima consideratio). Scotus is criticized throughout the work, but see especially DP I, 98-101 (Secunda consideratio & Quinta consideratio). See also Morrall 1960, 20-24. On the positive relation of Gerson to Bonaventure, see Glorieux 1974; Grosse 2004.

<sup>539</sup> DP I, 87 (*Contra vanam curiositatem*). The difference with Thomas Aquinas is noticeable. Whereas for Thomas the highest light is the light of glory received in the future life, in this text Gerson considers the highest light to be the light of faith, through which God is known already in this life.

<sup>540</sup> DP III, pars I, 22-23 (*Liber de vita spirituali animae*, lectio secunda, corollarium sextum). See also Morrall 1960, 49-50.

fourth one.<sup>541</sup> Gerson states that the three visions correspond to three types of knowledge: midday, morning and evening.<sup>542</sup> The most immediate of these is the *visio dei facialis & intuitiva*, the intuitive vision of God face-to-face, in which God is present as the immediate object. Gerson examines three different ways in which God can be the object of this immediate vision: 1) as the actual form of sight (*Deus esset ipsa formalis visio creaturae*); 2) as the object of sight without a mediating species (*objectum sine alia media specie*) and 3) and as the immediate object seen with the light of glory as the medium (*objectum immediatum & tamen mediante specie videretur cum lumine gloriae*). Here Gerson's point seems to be that the vision exists, but he does not take a stance on how it happens, though he considers the second way most probable.<sup>543</sup> However, it is interesting that Gerson states that this vision can be had either *ad tempus* or *ad perpetuum*. Unfortunately he does not elaborate on what he means by having the vision *ad tempus*, but one can offer at least two options. The first possibility is that Gerson suggests that this vision can be had already during this temporal life. If so, then Gerson accepts the intuitive knowledge of God in this life. The other option is that Gerson thinks that the soul can cease from the heavenly vision of God and then return to it. This option does not seem very likely either. The text is furthermore somewhat vague with regard to the points at which Gerson expresses his own opinion, and the points at which he merely lists the opinions of others.

The second type of vision according to Gerson is the *visio Dei specularis & sincera*, in which God can be seen through the special light of grace. Contrary to what Oberman claims, it seems that this is the type of vision Gerson attributes to St. Paul, not the *visio dei facialis & intuitiva*. This vision seems to refer to a special, momentaneous rapture, as Gerson notes that it is not permanent, but momentary. Gerson emphasizes that this type of vision can be attained through sincere faith or meditation. In this vision God is seen without any phantasms, movement, this or then, i.e., he is seen absolutely. Noteworthy here is that Gerson explicitly rejects the phantasms, which Thomas Aquinas connects to the light of grace. In the midst of this vision one is lifted up out of mental disturbances into a silence of the mind, but then one is quickly taken back again, because of phantasms and disturbances which disrupt the peace of the heart. The difference with regard to the first type of vision seems to be that this vision takes place through the light of grace as the mediating species. The difference with the *visio dei facialis & intuitiva* is that the former either has no mediating species, or is mediated by the light of glory, not by the light of faith. Thus according to Gerson the first type of vision is intuitive and immediate, but this type of vision abstractive. Nevertheless, this vision seems as well to suggest a strong sense of immediacy, as it is absolute and not concerned with phantasms, movement or time.<sup>544</sup>

<sup>541</sup> See DP III pars II, 485-486 (*Tractatus de oculo*). See also Vial 2006, 164-167, where he discusses the text and the three types of vision.

<sup>542</sup> These three types of knowledge are distinguished also by Bonaventure, see *Itinerarium* I, 3. The idea is a development of Augustine's division between two types of knowledge: morning and evening. On this division between types of knowledge on Augustine and Thomas see p. 48, especially footnote 161.

<sup>543</sup> DP III pars II, 485-486 (*Tractatus de oculo*). Gerson seems to speculate here on the manner in which the heavenly vision is actualized. In the first option, God himself is the capacity of vision. In the second, God is the object of the vision without a mediating species. In the third option, a mediating species (i.e. the light of glory) is posited, which is the Thomistic view on which see STh I q 12 a 2.

<sup>544</sup> Gerson's description of this vision is somewhat problematic. He states first that "*Visio Dei specularis & sincera, quae dicitur abstractiva, non intuitiva vel immediata, habita est ab Angelis & hominibus, pro statu*

Alongside these two, Gerson also lists a third vision (*visio Dei nubilaris & aenigmatica*), which is the vision of God through the light reflected in the creation. This vision seems to refer to the meditation of God through created things. As one can see, all these three types of vision have God as their object of cognition and are intellectual in their nature. In their categorization Gerson appears to attempt to harmonize the three lights of Bonaventure with the three visions and with the Thomistic and Scholastic doctrines concerning the vision of God, and with Augustinian types of knowledge. Thus here Gerson seems to stand closer to the Nominalist rejection of the intuitive vision of God in this life. However, Gerson's descriptions are still connected to the metaphysics of light. The three visions take place through different lights and are of an intellectual nature, a fact which calls into question the usual classification of Gerson as a Nominalist mystic. Much more pre-Nominalist content can be found in Gerson's writings than one might expect.

The erroneous classifications of Gerson's theology can be explained by the interesting fact that according to Gerson the three examined modes of vision discussed above are not the objective of mystical theology(!). Mystical theology according to Gerson, aspires to a fourth type of vision, the *visio dei anagogica*, which is indeed acquired through the love of God. As the term "anagogical" implies, in this particular vision God is not yet seen, only grasped by love, the cognition having been left behind. Thus Gerson compares the last type of vision to the sense of smell that a blind dog has.<sup>545</sup> (Incidentally one might ask in which sense it is proper to call this experience of God a "vision" per se). It therefore seems that Gerson does indeed approach the Dionysian mystical tradition (the central point of which is the hiddenness and unknowability of God) through the concept of love. For Gerson the term "mystical" is indeed connected to love, but this does not imply that Gerson's theology excludes Augustinian and Bonaventuran intellectual mysticism. It is rather the case, that that Gerson does not call the intellectual knowledge of God (as defined in the Augustinian and Bonaventuran mysticism) "mystical", although under the rubric of contemporary classification we are looking at two different types of mysticism, one concerned with intellectual cognition of God, the other with affective cognition. On the contrary, Gerson seems to reserve the term "mystical" only for the experiential knowledge of God of the fourth kind, which emphasizes the unknowability of God and is more easily attained by the uneducated layman. Nevertheless Gerson's theology clearly contains both types of mysticism. Therefore, when in the past Gerson has been seen as rejecting the intellectual pre-Nominalist mysticism and the doctrine of illumination for the sake of the priority of the affect, this interpretation seems to be built on a misreading which considers only his explicit definition of mysticism. That explicit definition has been taken from Gerson's works as *prima facie* evidence of his understanding of mysticism,

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naturae primitius institutae & ante collationem gloriae, licet diversimode in utraque." Thus he denies that the vision is immediate and intuitive. But then he continues: "Visio Dei specularis & sincera, longe facilius acquiritur per Fidem, Spem & Charitatem, cum vita conformi purificante mentis oculum, quam per solas physicas disciplinas acquiritur, & post raptum, qualis esse potuit visio Pauli reflexa super actum, quo intuitive vidit Deum." (DP III pars II, 486). Thus he also seems to call also this vision intuitive, unless the text is taken to mean that those who have seen God intuitively (like St. Paul) will more easily see God speculatively after that intuitive vision.

<sup>545</sup> DP III pars 2, 485.

without examining its place within the wider context of Gerson's theology.<sup>546</sup> On the contrary, when examined in the wider context, Gerson can be seen as a supporter of the doctrine of illumination and defender of Bonaventure, up to the point where he speaks about illumination by the divine light of faith. Based on the textual evidence, it is clear that Gerson accepts multiple types of intellectual mystical vision. What remains open for more analysis is the question whether Gerson accepts the immediate intuitive vision of God in this life, as well as whether he refines the exact nature of the vision given by the light of faith. There seems to be at least a possibility that his texts can be read as speaking about the immediate vision of God through the light of faith, and that such a reading seems possible is significant with regard to his influence on Luther.

This short review of the theologies of Augustine, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Peter Olivi, Henry of Ghent, Scotus and Gerson allows us to see how the theory of divine illumination developed through the Middle Ages. The one divine light discussed by Augustine was first refined into a general epistemological theory of illumination. In Thomism and later Franciscan theology, however, the idea of illumination by divine light was gradually rejected with regard to the natural reason. Divine illumination nevertheless kept its place as an explanation for the cognition of God realized through the lights of faith and glory. In theologies related to Thomism, the light of faith was seen as a mediating light, in which the actual object of faith, God, remains unknown. The immediate cognition of God is reserved for the Church Triumphant. In theologies related to that of Bonaventure, however, the light of faith was understood in a more immediate sense, so that a closer connection to Platonist epistemology (according to which the invisible objects of faith are immediately grasped) remained. This difference between the two ways of understanding the light of faith is of primary importance for the understanding of Martin Luther's theology concerning the light of faith.

### 3.2.2. Traditional Interpretations of Ps. 4:7

The doctrine of divine illumination is closely connected to specific biblical texts and to the images derived from them. One of the most important passages related to the doctrine is Ps. 4:7: "*Multi dicunt: quis ostendit nobis bona? Signatum est super nos Lumen vultus tui, Domine*". The verse is divided into two parts. The first part is a question about the good, the second speaks about "the light of the face" (*lumen vultus*) of God, which is "imprinted" or "sealed" (*signatum*) upon "us" (i.e., human beings or the faithful). Though in many modern translations of the Psalm the first part is translated as "Who will show us any good?" in the Medieval tradition the question was usually interpreted as "Who will show us *what* is good?" That is, the verse was understood as a question regarding the

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<sup>546</sup> The survey of Gerson's theology set forth here unfortunately must omit the development of his theology between his works. Vial 2006 divides the theological development of Gerson's mysticism into two stages. According to Vial, at the beginning of the first stage Gerson emphasizes God as the object of the affect and then moves to an abstractive concept of mysticism in which God is grasped through an absolute concept of being. In the second stage Gerson moves to a more eclectic and diverse theology focusing on the concept of experience. According to Vial, in this second stage Gerson considers God himself as the intuitive object of mystical experience (see p. 209-213). Vial also sees traces of doctrine of illumination in Gerson (see p. 74-84; 165).

foundation of moral principles, or as a question regarding where the *true good* (i.e., God, good in an absolute sense) can be found. Thus, the entire verse was read as a question regarding the source of the first principles of understanding (either theoretical or practical or both) or the knowledge of God. And it is precisely to this question that the answer is “the light of the face of God”. This light is understood to be the divine light which confers upon the soul eternal principles or knowledge of God, or both (as they can be taken as identical). Thus in the interpretation of the verse a major question of theological epistemology was connected to theological anthropology by the concept of *lumen signatum* (the light sealed upon us) understood through the Augustinian *imago Dei* doctrine. The highest part of the soul is impressed with the divine light, through which it knows God and eternal principles, and especially in this sense becomes an image of God.<sup>547</sup> In the following paragraphs I will discuss some interpretations of this verse which are important for understanding Luther’s treatment of this Psalm.

Just as the origin of the doctrine of divine illumination can be found in Augustine, so also can the traditional interpretation of Ps. 4:7 as referring to divine illumination. One of the most significant passages where Augustine discusses the Psalm from this point of view can be found in the *Confessions*, book IX chapter 4:

Nor were my good things external nor could they be sought with carnal eyes in that sun; when they wish to rejoice in the external they will easily become empty and leak out into those things, which they see and which are temporal, and they will lick their images with starving thoughts. Oh if they would grow weary of their starvation and say: “Who will show us good?”, and we would respond, and they would hear: “The light of your face has been sealed in us, O Lord”. For we are not the light that illuminates everyone, but we are enlightened by you, so that we who once were darkness, would be a light in you. Oh if they only could see that internal light Eternal, since when I tasted it, I gnashed my teeth, because I could not show it to them, unless they would turn their heart which is in their external eyes from me towards you and say: “Who will show us good?”<sup>548</sup>

One can see how Augustine connects his interpretation of the Psalm with divine illumination. In this passage Augustine sets external and internal good things against each other. He reads the question of the Psalmist as a cry about where true good things can be found. In his answer Augustine wishes that those, whose eyes are turned towards external and temporal things, insufficient for satisfying the soul, would turn their mind toward the internal Eternal light (i.e., Christ), the light that illumines everyone. The light of the face of God would then satisfy the seeker either by showing the eternal good things, or, by the

<sup>547</sup> On the significance of this verse for Augustine and the medieval tradition see Ebeling 1989, 328-330; Marrone 2001, 22. In some translations the two sentences are divided between verses six and seven of the Psalm. I use here the Vulgate translation used by Luther, see AWA 55, 80, 6-7; 730, 169-192; AWA 1, 492, 18 – 493, 10; AWA 2, 198, 1-2.

<sup>548</sup> Conf. IX, 4: 8-10: “nec iam bona mea foris erant nec oculis carneis in isto sole quaerebantur. volentes enim gaudere forinsecus facile vaneunt et effunduntur in ea quae videntur et temporalia sunt, et imagines eorum famelica cogitatione lambiunt. et o si fatigentur inedia et dicant, ‘quis ostendet nobis bona?’ et dicamus, et audiant, ‘signatum est in nobis lumen vultus tui, domine.’ non enim lumen nos sumus quod inluminat omnem hominem, sed inluminamur a te ut, qui fuimus aliquando tenebrae, simus lux in te. o si viderent internum aeternum, quod ego quia gustaveram, frendebam, quoniam non eis poteram ostendere, si afferent ad me cor in oculis suis foris a te et dicerent, ‘quis ostendet nobis bona?’” Translation is NPNF vol. 1, 132 but modified for clarity and precision.

fact that it itself consists of them. (The exact nature of this light for Augustine, whether as identical with God or emanating from him, is difficult to ascertain.) There are two points to note here: First, that it is by divine illumination received *ab extra* that the human heart recognizes what is good, as Augustine clearly states that “we are not that light”. Second, that turning toward that light conveys fellowship with God, as one turned toward that light becomes “a light in you” (i.e., in God). Augustine also discusses the same passage in the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, where he likewise defines the light as “the true good, which is grasped not by the eyes, but by mind”. There he also describes the meaning of the “sealing” by explaining how a coin is imprinted with the image of the king. In a similar manner, the soul is imprinted with the image of God by the divine light.<sup>549</sup> In a summary, in Augustine’s view by turning towards the divine light the mind participates in God, the true good, and in the eternal principles which it knows by divine illumination.

As discussed in the previous chapter, in medieval theology different views concerning the doctrine of illumination developed. Those accepting the doctrine, such as Bonaventure and Gerson, interpreted Ps. 4:7 in accordance with Augustine. In the *Itinerarium* Bonaventure speaks of the contemplation of God outside ourselves through the vestiges (*vestigia*) of God, within ourselves through the image (*imaginem*) of God, and above ourselves through the light (*lumen*), which has been impressed upon (*supra*) our mind and is the light of the Eternal truth.<sup>550</sup> Gerson refers to Bonaventure’s description in the *Itinerarium* of God as the best object that can be thought of, and to the natural cognition of God in the soul through this concept as the imprint of the face of God.<sup>551</sup> In the *De vita spirituali animae* he states that the divine laws, through which we know what is true and good, are impressed upon us by the immediate irradiation of the divine light, also referring here to the said Psalm.<sup>552</sup> In the *Contra vanam curiositatem* he speaks about the intuition

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<sup>549</sup> Enarr. in Ps. IV, 8: “*Signatum est, inquit, in nobis lumen vultus tui, Domine. Hoc lumen est totum hominis et verum bonum, quod non oculis, sed mente conspicitur. Signatum autem dixit in nobis, tanquam denarius signatur regis imagine: homo enim factus est ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei (Gen. I, 26), quam peccando corrumpit: bonum ergo ejus est verum atque aeternum, si renascendo signetur. Et ad hoc credo pertinere, quod quidam prudenter intelligunt, illud quod Dominus viso Caesaris nummo ait: Reddite Caesari quod Caesaris est, et Deo quod Dei est (Matth. XXII, 21); tanquam si diceret: Quemadmodum Caesar a vobis exigit impressionem imaginis suae, sic et Deus; ut quemadmodum illi redditur nummus, sic Deo anima lumine vultus ejus illustrata atque signata.*”

See also Ebeling 1989, 329.

<sup>550</sup> *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* V, 1: “Quoniam autem contingit contemplari Deum non solum *extra nos* et *intra nos*, verum etiam *supra nos*: *extra* per vestigium, *intra* per imaginem et *supra* per lumen, quod est signatum supra mentem nostram, quod est lumen Veritatis aeternae, cum « ipsa mens nostra immediate ab ipsa Veritate formetur »”

<sup>551</sup> See *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* chapter V, to which Gerson refers at *Contra vanam curiositatem*, prima lectio, prima consideratio: “Ductus itaque ratiocinationis naturalis ad hoc pertingit, ut sciat quod sit unus Deus, princeps & rector omnium, qui dedit omnibus esse & vivere; his quidem clarius, illis vero obscurius. *Invisibilia enim Dei a creatura mundi per ea que facta sunt intellectus conspiciunt, sempiterna quoque virtus ejus & divinitas.* Rom. 1.20. Est quippe omnibus inditum a multis naturali demonstratione conclusum, ut Deus sit quo nihil melius cogitari potest, esse qui habeat quicquid melius ipsum quam non ipsum. Haec est enim Philosophia quam Apostolus & instructus ab eo Dionysius nominat Dei sapientiam, immo revelationem. *Deus* (inquit Apostolus) *revelavit eis*, Philipp. 3.15. quam revelationem intelligo lumen vultus Domini signatum super nos, quemadmodum pulcherrimo & evidentissimo compendio divinus Bonaventura deducit in suo *Itinerario mentis ad Deum.*” (DP I, 91)

<sup>552</sup> “Sequitur quod non absurde concedi potest omnia principia Juris naturalis esse de Lege divina proprie dicta, licet diversa ratione: hoc perspicuum erit si attendimus quemadmodum omnia principia Juris naturalis Deo revelante ac jubente continet Lex tam antiqua quam nova ad finem beatitudinis aeternae. Et aliunde

of the face of God, which is impressed on the soul especially when the soul is elevated by the most gracious light of faith that is infused in it.<sup>553</sup> Bonaventure and Gerson thus represent a reading in which the Psalm 4:7 is taken as speaking of immediate divine illumination, through which the human mind receives knowledge of God and eternal laws. Furthermore, we can see here how the text is applied to human knowledge of the eternal law (i.e., the highest moral principles). The light works as the foundation of natural knowledge of God and, indeed, as the foundation of all permanent or true knowledge. The light has this function because foundational concepts of understanding such as the transcendental concepts of being and goodness, or first principles of the moral laws, are received through the light. However, the light also functions as the foundation for contemplation, in which the soul ascends by it from itself over itself to the contemplation of the essential properties of God, so that the light increases to the degree of contemplation achieved.<sup>554</sup> In *Contra vanam curiositatem* Gerson interprets this ascent described by Bonaventure in the *Itinerarium* as the light of faith, which above all shows the face of God.<sup>555</sup> Thus, different degrees of light also emerge within the tradition that leans most heavily on Augustine, such that we can speak of two different distinctions: A) That between the 1) external light of the visible creation received by the senses, 2) the internal light of reason as the image of God, and 3) the superior light, of which the image of God is the reflection (i.e., the light of faith); and B) that between 1) the natural light of reason, 2) the light of grace or faith, and 3) the light of glory. Bonaventure and Gerson follow the first distinction, with Gerson also evincing traces of the other in places,<sup>556</sup> whereas Thomists and the proponents of the *via moderna* in general seem to follow the second. Within the first distinction made by the Augustinian-Bonaventurean tradition, the lights are not separated from each other on account of the status of the person (i.e., for unbelievers the natural light, for believers the light of faith, for triumphant souls the light of glory), but on account of the disposition of the person towards the divine light. Thus the

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forsan istud suadere possumus, ex hoc quod talium principiorum indita este notificatione creaturae rationali per immediatam divinae lucis irradiationem, quemadmodum tradiderunt Augustinus & alii Doctores elevate, & olim super hoc fuit Articulus Parisiensis tempore Guillelmi Parisiensis, prout legi in beato Thoma, & Bonaventura declarati pulcherrime in *Itinerario mentis in Deum*, ostendens nullum esse dictamen rectae rationis solidum & obligatorium nisi in prima Lege & luce stabilizatur. Propterea Philosophorum maximi & praecipui, inter quos floruerunt Socrates & caeteri Academici, ingénue professi sunt, nihil in rebus mutabilibus se scire, nullam eis reperire veritatem, & nullum esse dictamen rectum rationis: quod si per hoc omnem a nobis veritatem & rectum dictamen simpliciter excludebant, errant intolerabiliter, quod de tantis investigatoribus veritatis sentine nefas est, nisi pro quanto forsitan Deum cognoscere & non sicut Deum glorificantes, neque gratias agentes; quia quae abscondita ejus errant manifestarint eis, dati erant jam in reprobum sensum, & deficiebant scrutantes scrutinio. Sentiebant igitur, si bene sentiebant in hac tanta confessione ignorantiae, quod solus Deus sicut est immobilis, ita est Veritas stabilis & Lex certa & constans, in qua videmus quae bonae sunt & vera, consonantis in hoc Prophetiae eximio, qui postquam praemiseraat; *multi dicunt quis ostendit nobis bona?* Ps IV.6. Respondens subintulit: *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui Domine.*” *De vita spirituali animae*, lectio secunda, corollarium sextum (DP III, pars I, 22-23)

<sup>553</sup> “Quamobrem elevanda est anima ab infimo habitaculo carceris ad medium, & consequenter ad supremum, quatenus intueri valeat lumen vultus Domini, quod signatum est super eam maxime si est lumen gratuitum Fidei de super infusum ad credendum Evangelio, praemittit poenitentiam.” *Contra vanam curiositatem* (DP I, 87).

<sup>554</sup> This is described in chapter V of the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*.

<sup>555</sup> *Contra vanam curiositatem* (DP I, 87-88).

<sup>556</sup> See the distinction between the light of glory and the light of grace and the three types of vision of God in *De Oculo* (DP III, 485-486).

grades of ascent described by Bonaventure, when the soul enters itself, are understood with regard to the clarity of the light without positing an insurmountable ontological difference between the lights. Even though the lower lights are at a different ontological level as reflections and derivatives of the light of the higher degree, the hierarchy of lights at the same time enables an ascent from one light to the other. This view is unlike that of the Thomist and Nominalist system, because here the hierarchy of the lights is based on a Platonist hierarchy of being.

The other view regarding illumination that developed in the Middle Ages is that in which the light Augustine spoke of was understood as the natural light of the human intellect. Thomas Aquinas represents a mediating view, according to which the intellect has its own natural light, but that light is nevertheless an impression of the divine light, but as a created likeness and not as participation in the first light. Also Thomas refers to the Psalm 4:7 in multiple locations in the *Summa Theologiae*.<sup>557</sup> First, Thomas defines that in order to understand, a mobile and imperfect thing requires the pre-existence of something immovable and perfect (which is God himself) from whom the soul receives its intellectual light as participated similitude, derived from the first light, but as a natural power.<sup>558</sup> Second, Thomas discusses the question regarding in which way the eternal types are known. According to him, the soul does not know the eternal types directly, but as a principle of knowledge. Beside the eternal type, actual cognition also requires the material object: Thomas thus refutes the Platonist view. When Augustine speaks of the holy and pure souls who see the eternal reasons in the divine light, Thomas interprets this as pertaining solely to the souls in the heavenly vision. Thomas thus excludes the immediate contemplation of the divine light in this life.<sup>559</sup> Furthermore, according to Schumacher for

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<sup>557</sup> See Ebeling 1989, 337-338.

<sup>558</sup> Sth I q79 a 4 “Sed intellectus separatus, secundum nostrae fidei documenta, est ipse Deus, qui est creator animae, et in quo solo beatificatur, ut infra patebit. Unde ab ipso anima humana lumen intellectuale participat, secundum illud Psalmi IV, *signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, domine*.”

Sth I q12 a 2: “Respondeo dicendum quod ad visionem, tam sensibilem quam intellectualem, duo requiruntur, scilicet virtus visiva, et unio rei visae cum visu, non enim fit visio in actu, nisi per hoc quod res visa quodammodo est in vidente. Et in rebus quidem corporalibus, apparet quod res visa non potest esse in vidente per suam essentiam, sed solum per suam similitudinem, sicut similitudo lapidis est in oculo, per quam fit visio in actu, non autem ipsa substantia lapidis. Si autem esset una et eadem res, quae esset principium visivae virtutis, et quae esset res visa, oporteret videntem ab illa re et virtutem visivam habere, et formam per quam videret. Manifestum est autem quod Deus et est auctor intellectivae virtutis, et ab intellectu videri potest. Et cum ipsa intellectiva virtus creaturae non sit Dei essentia, relinquitur quod sit aliqua participata similitudo ipsius, qui est primus intellectus. Unde et virtus intellectualis creaturae lumen quoddam intelligibile dicitur, quasi a prima luce derivatum, sive hoc intelligatur de virtute naturali, sive de aliqua perfectione superaddita gratiae vel gloriae.”

<sup>559</sup> Sth I q 84 a 5: “Cum ergo quaeritur utrum anima humana in rationibus aeternis omnia cognoscat, dicendum est quod aliquid in aliquo dicitur cognosci dupliciter. Uno modo, sicut in obiecto cognito; sicut aliquis videt in speculo ea quorum imagines in speculo resultant. Et hoc modo anima, in statu praesentis vitae, non potest videre omnia in rationibus aeternis; sed sic in rationibus aeternis cognoscunt omnia beati, qui Deum vident et omnia in ipso. Alio modo dicitur aliquid cognosci in aliquo sicut in cognitionis principio; sicut si dicamus quod in sole videntur ea quae videntur per solem. Et sic necesse est dicere quod anima humana omnia cognoscat in rationibus aeternis, per quarum participationem omnia cognoscimus. Ipsum enim lumen intellectuale quod est in nobis, nihil est aliud quam quaedam participata similitudo luminis increati, in quo continentur rationes aeternae. Unde in Psalmo IV, dicitur, *multi dicunt, quis ostendit nobis bona?* Cui quaestioni Psalmista respondet, dicens, *signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, domine*. Quasi dicat, per ipsam sigillationem divini luminis in nobis, omnia nobis demonstrantur. Quia tamen praeter lumen intellectuale in nobis, exiguntur species intelligibiles a rebus acceptae, ad scientiam de rebus materialibus habendam; ideo non per solam participationem rationum aeternarum de rebus materialibus



Thomas the divine light does not allow access to the ideas themselves or to the knowledge of God, but rather works as a *capacity* that abstracts concepts from sense material. The origin of the capacity is divine, but divine illumination is not directly required in the actions of this capacity.<sup>560</sup>

In addition to the functioning of the intellect in concept abstraction, Thomas also writes about the role of illumination with regard to the natural reason in discerning between good and evil. This is possible, says Thomas, because of the participation of the intellect in the eternal law. Referring to the Psalm 4:7 Thomas affirms that:

Now among all others, the rational creature is subject to Divine providence in the most excellent way, in so far as it partakes of a share of providence, by being provident both for itself and for others. Wherefore it has a share of the Eternal Reason, whereby it has a natural inclination to its proper act and end: and this participation of the eternal law in the rational creature is called the natural law. Hence the Psalmist after saying (Psalm 4:6): "Offer up the sacrifice of justice," as though someone asked what the works of justice are, adds: "Many say, Who showeth us good things?" in answer to which question he says: "The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us": thus implying that the light of natural reason, whereby we discern what is good and what is evil, which is the function of the natural law, is nothing else than an imprint on us of the Divine light. It is therefore evident that the natural law is nothing else than the rational creature's participation of the eternal law.<sup>561</sup>

Unlike in Thomas's account of concept abstraction, here the sense in which the eternal reasons direct the created rational creature remains more vague. Nevertheless, here also one can see a strong emphasis on natural cognition: the natural reason is enough for a creature's participation in the divine law and for discerning the difference between good and evil. Therefore we can see in Thomas a shift from the direct illumination of Bonaventure towards the self-sufficiency of the natural cognitive capacities of the human

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notitiam habemus, sicut Platonici posuerunt quod sola idearum participatio sufficit ad scientiam habendam. Unde Augustinus dicit, in IV de Trin., *numquid quia philosophi documentis certissimis persuadent aeternis rationibus omnia temporalia fieri, propterea potuerunt in ipsis rationibus perspicere, vel ex ipsis colligere quot sint animalium genera, quae semina singulorum? Nonne ista omnia per locorum ac temporum historiam quaesierunt?* Quod autem Augustinus non sic intellexerit omnia cognosci in rationibus aeternis, vel in incommutabili veritate, quasi ipsae rationes aeternae videantur, patet per hoc quod ipse dicit in libro octoginta trium quaest., quod *rationalis anima non omnis et quaelibet, sed quae sancta et pura fuerit, asseritur illi visioni*, scilicet rationum aeternarum, esse idonea; sicut sunt animae beatorum."

<sup>560</sup> Schumacher 2011, 173-178. According to Schumacher, the difference between Bonaventure and Thomas is that Bonaventure uses divine illumination as an extrinsic influence which grants the mind a priori concepts, whereas for Thomas the illumination stands as capacity which abstracts the concepts. Schumacher claims that Thomas represents the more genuinely Augustinian view, with which I do not agree. In my opinion, Augustine clearly speaks about cognition of the light itself, which satisfies the soul.

<sup>561</sup> Sth. Ia IIae q91 a2 co: "Inter cetera autem rationalis creatura excellentiori quodam modo divinae providentiae subiacet, inquantum et ipsa fit providentiae particeps, sibi ipsi et aliis providens. Unde et in ipsa participatur ratio aeterna, per quam habet naturalem inclinationem ad debitum actum et finem. Et talis participatio legis aeternae in rationali creatura lex naturalis dicitur. Unde cum Psalmista dixisset, sacrificare sacrificium iustitiae, quasi quibusdam quaerentibus quae sunt iustitiae opera, subiungit, multi dicunt, quis ostendit nobis bona? Cui quaestioni respondens, dicit, signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, domine, quasi lumen rationis naturalis, quo discernimus quid sit bonum et malum, quod pertinet ad naturalem legem, nihil aliud sit quam impressio divini luminis in nobis. Unde patet quod lex naturalis nihil aliud est quam participatio legis aeternae in rationali creatura." English translation taken from Summa Theologica 2008.

reason. Furthermore, for Thomas (unlike Bonaventure and Gerson) the divine light imparts no direct knowledge of God on the knower, except in the heavenly vision enjoyed by the blessed in the special light of glory. Thomas's view can nevertheless be seen as a mediating one, because he ascribes some function to the divine light in the human cognition. Moreover, also Thomas utilizes the concept of the light of grace or light of faith, but for him that light only strengthens the natural capacity of the intellect and allows it to receive prophetic images (*phantasmata*) and to understand and trust the revelation given through them. It ordains or disposes the soul towards the heavenly glory and allows it to be oriented towards the heavenly beauty. It allows the soul to discern the dogmas that are to be believed from those that are not. At the same time, however, it remains faith because it does not yet comprehend the objects towards which it disposes the soul. It does not yet grant any immediate cognition or knowledge of God. That is, it does not grant the soul that cognition whereby the veracity of the truths believed are confirmed through the comprehension of the object to which they refer. Thomas therefore maintains the distinction between the heavenly glory and the light of faith as an insurmountable ontological distinction between the light of faith and the light of glory. This distinction does not allow an ascent to immediate contemplation of God, unlike the hierarchy of lights in Bonaventure and Gerson.<sup>562</sup> Thomas's idea regarding the light of natural reason is developed further in the *via moderna*, the representatives of which argue for the complete self-sufficiency of the human cognitive capacities in knowing immutable principles. Among others, Scotus and Biel argue that these principles are known by means of themselves (*per se nota*), such that no external influence or illumination is needed.<sup>563</sup> In the work of some authors the views of Thomists the *via moderna* seem to be combined, so that for an example Nicholas of Lyra, the famous biblical commentator frequently employed by Luther, a Franciscan and co-temporary of Scotus, seems to combine both views in his glosses on Psalm 4:7. He writes:

The natural light of the human intellect, which is a certain imprint of the divine light, by which the human being in his intellectual part is an image of God, shows us sufficiently what the works of righteousness are, because as the first principles of the speculative (sciences) are known by means of themselves [*per se nota*], so also of the practical (sciences), of which conclusions can be deduced by the light of natural reason.<sup>564</sup>

Thus, though Lyra retains the idea of the intellect as an imprint of the divine light, on the other hand he affirms its capacity of knowing the moral principles sufficient for righteous works by purely natural reason in its own natural light, without any general or special divine illumination. Thus in the glosses of Lyra and in the views of the *via*

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<sup>562</sup> See Sth I a 12 q 13; Ia IIae q 109; Stolz 1933; Aubert 1958, 43-71; Kirjavainen 1983, 130-136; Rosental 2011. According to Aubert, in his early works Thomas has a more illuminationist view, but departs from it and places more emphasis on the persuasion of the will (through the habit of faith) to acceptance of propositions not understood.

<sup>563</sup> See Scotus: *Ordinatio* I dist. 3 pars 1 q 4 (229-234), Biel: *Collectorium circa quattuor libros sententiarum*, Prologus, q2 a1 n2 (p. 33)

<sup>564</sup> Lyra, *Biblia cum glossis*: "Lumen naturale intellectus humani, quod est quaedam impressio divini luminis, eo quod homo secundum partem intellectivam est ad imaginem dei, sufficienter ostendit, quae sint opera iustitiae; quia sicut prima principia speculabilium sunt per se nota, ita et operabilium, ex quibus possunt deduci conclusiones in lumine naturalis rationis." (cited in AWA 2, 200 footnote 20)

*moderna* the natural capabilities of the human being become sufficient for knowing what is right. From one side, the relationship between God and the human being established by divine illumination is eliminated and a cognitive gap driven between God and the human mind. From the other side, the human being acquires the capacity to know, without any special divine illustration or faith, the first principles of morals, i.e., that which is right and good. These are according to Lyra sufficient for righteous works. These ontological and epistemological presuppositions of the *via moderna* form the precondition for the radically Pelagian understanding of the doctrine of *facere quod in se est* of the Late Middle Ages. This background creates the necessary conditions for understanding the foundation upon which Martin Luther in his biblical commentaries addresses the issue.

### 3.2.3. Luther's Interpretation of Ps. 4:7: The Light of the Face of God as the Light of Faith

Psalm 4 and its words about the light of the face of God seem to have held a special significance for Martin Luther, as he returned to it in the course of his two early psalm lectures (*Dictata super Psalterium*, *Operationes in Psalmos*) more often than any other psalm. Luther's first remarks on Psalm 4 are in the glosses of the *Dictata super Psalterium* (1513-15). However, he seems not to have been satisfied with his work, returning to the psalm again in conjunction with Ps. 92 and having replaced the original scholia on Ps. 4 with a later text that has been dated to 1516. Luther then returns to the Psalm in the so-called *Vatican Fragments* (1516/17) and finally in the *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519-21).<sup>565</sup> Therefore, Luther's first extant remarks on Psalm 4 are the 1513 glosses of the *Dictata*. Here the most significant features of Luther's interpretation already appear. Luther explains Ps. 4:6-7, the central text in the tradition of divine illumination, as follows:

Many [who are] wise, strong, holy in their own eyes say 'who will show us good', i.e., we know by ourselves, 'are you the one to teach us?', John 6. We do not want to be directed by faith [*fidei ostensionem*]: Therefore, because they do not wish, behold, **sealed is** impressed by a fixed sign **upon us** because we are not those 'many' **the light** which shows the good **of your face**, the divinity or spirit of the **Lord**. But to them only the light of your backside is shown.<sup>566</sup>

<sup>565</sup> There also exist Luther's *Adnotationes Quincuplici Fabri Stapulensis* (WA 4, 473, 8-32), which do, however, not cover verse 4:7, and Luther's short comments on Ps. 4 in connection with his exposition of Ps. 118/119 (WA 55, II, 991, 2898 – 992, 2912). An overview of Luther's texts between 1513-1521 commenting on Ps. 4 can be found in Byung-Sig Chung's dissertation *Martin Luthers Auslegung von Psalm 4 in den Jahren 1513-1521* (Chung 2000). This work unfortunately contains very little theological analysis, although it is a good review of the source material. Ebeling 1989, 328-345 also examines Luther's interpretations of Ps. 4:7, but here also the theological background of Luther's interpretation is described unsatisfactorily. Ebeling superficially examines the interpretations of Augustine and Thomas, but omits the significance of the text for the doctrine of illumination, especially in the Franciscan and mystical traditions.

<sup>566</sup> WA 55, I, 22, 3 – 24, 2: "**Multi** sapientes, fortes, Sancti in oculis suis **dicunt quis ostendit nobis** [4] **bona** q. d. nos ipsi scimus, 'tu nos doces?' Iohann. 6. Nolumus fidei [5] 3, 39 ostensionem: Ideo, quia nolunt, Ecce [4, 7] **signatum est** signo fixe <sup>1</sup> impressum [6] **super nos**<sup>12</sup> qui non sumus de illis 'multis'

Luther's interpretation is dependent on the Augustinian tradition at least in two respects: First, in his understanding the question of the Psalm as mockery by those who think they already know what is good and do not seek a teacher.<sup>567</sup> By so doing they turn their faces away from God and their backside to him; and consequently then only see the light of the backside of God (i.e., created things). They are blinded in the spirit, which is the face of the mind, and do not know the light of the face of God, which is faith. The true good, however, is given through the divine light, which shows the face of God. This is then the second point in which Luther is connected to the exposition of Augustine: there are those who have the light of the face of God, and those who do not. That Luther relies here on Augustine in his interpretation of the Psalm is explicitly confirmed by a gloss in which Luther points to Augustine's treatment of the Psalm in the *Confessions*.<sup>568</sup> For Augustine (as well as Bonaventure) the light was, in principle, accessible to everyone by turning inwards. In this sense it could also be interpreted as a natural light: as a light which every human being could (at least, in theory) perceive if he turned towards it, because the *imago Dei* present in him consisted of that light. But for Luther, as we have seen, that turning is only possible through the infusion of the light of faith, not by one's own means. It comes *ab extra*, it is an infused divine virtue and not a natural capacity of man after the Fall.<sup>569</sup> In this sense, Luther's interpretation of the light is distinctly medieval: it is not the natural light of reason, but the light of faith infused through the external word and sacraments. A further supposition behind Luther's view seems to be that because the light is not known to all, it must be the light of faith, not the natural light of reason. Therefore, even if Augustine does not speak of the light of the Psalm as the light of faith, Luther interprets him as doing so. Luther's understanding of the light of the Psalm precisely as the light of faith may also be indebted to Gerson, who also speaks about the light of faith in connection with Psalm 4.<sup>570</sup> However, besides the point that the light is faith, in other respects the light is treated in Luther's theological anthropology very much like the light is treated in Augustine's thought. In accordance with the Augustinian view in which the divine light, comprehension of the eternal truths, the highest part of the soul (intellect) and the *imago Dei* are all interconnected, Luther in the marginal glosses to the Psalm 4 defines the light in relation to the intellect, as "knowledge" or "perception" (*agnitio*) of living spirit (i.e., spirit made alive by faith) and as "spiritual intellect".<sup>571</sup> Thus only those who possess faith possess the intellect in the proper sense, as was seen already above.<sup>572</sup> Thus through this connection we can clearly see that Luther subscribes to the doctrine of illumination. What we are speaking of here is specific a theological illumination for a theological purpose, however. For Luther, the doctrine of illumination (by faith, at least) is not the foundation of all understanding, as it was for Augustine and

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**lumen** bonorum [1] ostensium fides **vultus**<sup>13</sup> **tui** diunitatis vel spiritus **domine** illis autem [2] dorsi tui tantum ostenditur lux."

<sup>567</sup> See Ebeling 1989, 334-335.

<sup>568</sup> See WA 55, I, 26 gloss 16, which is the final gloss on the Psalm. That Luther also relies on Augustine's *Confessions* when interpreting the verse Ps. 4:7 has escaped the attention of both Ebeling and the editors of WA volume 55. Luther points to book VIII of the *Confessions*, but the text is actually in book IX. The passage in which Augustine discusses verse 4:7 is quoted in footnote 548.

<sup>569</sup> See chapter 2.4.2.1.

<sup>570</sup> See footnote 553.

<sup>571</sup> WA 55, I, 24 gloss 13: "Lumen Vultus est agnitio spiritus viui seu spiritualis intellectus"

<sup>572</sup> See chapters 2.4.1.1 and 2.4.1.2.

Bonaventure. Rather, it forms the foundation for the understanding of God, the true good, and divine and incomprehensible things. Thus one can say that in distinguishing between the natural light of reason and the light of faith, Luther follows the Thomist division between the three lights, but that in his understanding of the actual nature of the light as the spiritual intellect which grants knowledge of God, he follows the Augustinian Franciscan tradition.

However, there is one reservation that needs to be made. This concerns Luther's peculiar understanding of faith (or the content of faith) as a sign (*signum*) or something concealed (*signatum*). This understanding together with Luther's statements about how faith is connected to things that "do not appear" or "are not present" (*rerum non apparentium*), has prompted many German scholars to define faith as something which points outside of itself, as a sign of future things in which the reality is not yet present.<sup>573</sup> Regarding this question one can already here note that the concept *signatum* ("concealed, closed") has multiple meanings for Luther, one of which we will see in Luther's next remarks on the Psalm 4, which appear in the scholia on Ps. 92 in the *Dictata*. However, the exact relationship between faith as sign and faith as illumination (i.e., the ontology of faith and the epistemology of faith) cannot yet be fully defined in this chapter. It requires that first the way in which the object of faith is present is examined. Only after that can the way in which it is not yet present be examined.<sup>574</sup>

Luther's glosses on Ps. 4 in the *Dictata* would normally have been accompanied with scholia written at the same time. However, in the manuscript the pages that would have contained the scholia on Psalm 4, along with some pages of the scholia on Psalm 1, are missing. They have been replaced with a later manuscript which has been dated to 1516.<sup>575</sup> The oldest remaining scholia on Psalm 4 therefore appear in connection with Psalm 92, where Luther interrupts the exposition of this psalm and returns to Psalm 4 stating that "before we expounded it with not enough understanding".<sup>576</sup> In the scholia Luther takes as his hermeneutical key the perspective of the theology of the Cross, that is, the idea that spiritual good things are hidden under visible bad things.<sup>577</sup> Luther states that there are the many who do not ask, "Who will show us good?", but: "Who will show us our good?". He continues, possibly criticizing the interpretations of Thomas Aquinas and Nicholas of Lyra: "And why? Because they already consider themselves righteous ... and only seek good as a reward of righteousness." In contrast to them, Luther continues, the light of the face of the Lord leads to that "we do not seek what they seek, for we have been instructed and enlightened by you. We seek, not good, but rather bad things ... You make us wonderful, while you show us good things, when you show evil."<sup>578</sup> Thus Luther

<sup>573</sup> See, for example, Schwarz 1962, 154-156. Already in these first glosses Luther defines faith as *rerum non apparentium*: "quia supra captum humanum est 'fides rerum non apparentium'. Et in hiis duobus verbis stat diffinitio fidei, Heb. xi." (WA 55, I, 22, gloss 12).

<sup>574</sup> This question is treated in full in chapter 3.4.1.

<sup>575</sup> WA 55, II, XXIII – XXXII.

<sup>576</sup> WA 55, II, 726, 56-58. "Vnde [57] 4, 88 quia Psal. 4. meminimus Et supra non satis intelligentes| eum exposuimus, [58] Et multi extra crucem Christi eum querentes laboriose eum exposuerunt."

<sup>577</sup> On the theology of the Cross see chapter 2.2.4.3.

<sup>578</sup> WA 55, II, 730, 185-196: "Quia non dicunt simpliciter: Quis ostendit [186] bona? Sed 'nobis' bona i. e. que nobis bona, placentia et Iucunda sunt. Sed [187] nec sic dicunt: Quis ostendit nobis bona Domini? Sicut Psal. 26.: 'Credo [188] videre bona Domini in terra viventium.' Et quare? Quia iam sibi Iusti [189] videntur. Non enim dicunt: Quis ostendit nobis Iusta aut recta? Quia [190] suam Iustitiam statuunt et

combines here the idea of the light of the face of God illumining and showing good things, with the concept of the theology of the Cross: the spiritual good things are hidden and concealed under apparent evil. Thus the light of faith acquires an interpretative function. It shows the real, hidden content of things, as opposed to mere appearances or apparent good.

After the *Dictata*, Luther went on to lecture on the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians in 1515-16 and on Hebrews in 1517-18. From around this period there remain two manuscripts on Psalm 4 that have been viewed as a preparation for Luther's second commentary on the Psalms, the *Operationes in Psalmos*.<sup>579</sup> The first of these are the Vatican Fragments, published in AWA 1, the other the above mentioned scholia on Psalm 4 in the *Dictata* manuscript replacing the original scholia. The glosses contained in the Vatican Fragments mostly follow the early glosses of the *Dictata*. The first sentence of Psalm 4 is again interpreted as the mockery of the unbelievers directed to Christ in John 6, and in this Luther again follows Augustine.<sup>580</sup> Luther also states in the glosses and scholia of the Fragments that the "word of the Cross" shows evil things, on account of which the Jews are scandalized. The idea of the theology of the Cross, that the true good is hidden under contraries, is thus repeated.<sup>581</sup> However, the glosses and scholia are quite interesting in another respect, in that they contain a connection to the figure of the Tabernacle, which for Luther is both the image of the universe as well as of the human being.<sup>582</sup> Luther explains in these glosses that the light of the face of God is sealed (*signatum*) to those who are blinded by the veil of the letter: i.e., the first veil that stands between the literal interpretation of the Jews and the spiritual interpretation of the Christians. Faith is the removal of this veil and the clarity of the new covenant, in which true good things are shown (*ostendatur*). Luther's interpretation seems to be connected to Gerson and Bonaventure, who likewise use the Tabernacle as an illustration of the process of the soul turning inside itself, and being elevated above itself by the divine light.<sup>583</sup> According to Luther's interpretation, by faith one enters the middle chamber where the light of the face shows: not the backside of God (i.e., created things) which the wicked see, but "the very face and vision of God" (*visio dei*).<sup>584</sup> Thus, faith (at least in an incipient manner) shows God in a way that can be spoken of even in the terms of the *visio dei*. Here also we can see a similarity between Luther and Gerson. Nevertheless, according to Luther there is a distinction between faith and the heavenly vision, also defined with the help of the image

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Iustitiam se tenere arbitrantur, tantum bona [191] et velut premia querunt Iustitię. Sed, o 'Domine, Signatum est super [192] nos Lumen vultus tui.' Non querimus nos quod isti, quia eruditi et [193] illuminati sumus a te. Nec bona, Sed potius mala querimus. Non fugimus [194] ad bona, vt euadamus mala, Sed suscipimus mala, vt clamemus et tu nos [195] exaudias, vt mirifices nos, dum nobis bona ostendis, quando mala ostendis; [196] cętera patent satis."

<sup>579</sup> See AWA 1, 48-50.

<sup>580</sup> See Ebeling 1989, 334-335.

<sup>581</sup> AWA 1, 492, 18 – 493, 9; 509, 18-21.

<sup>582</sup> See chapters 2.3.3.3 and 2.4.1.1.

<sup>583</sup> See footnote 553.

<sup>584</sup> AWA 1, 493, 10-18: "*Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, domine*: illi qui in velamine litterae excaecati, sic dicunt. Sed: *Lumen*, id est fides, quae est revelatio istius velaminis et claritatis novi testamenti, quo ostenduntur nobis vera bona, *signatum est*, id est signum et 'argumentum non apparentium' nobis tamen impressum. *Lumen*, inquam, *vultus tui*, id est, quod vultum tuum ostendit, non dorsum; quia bona nostra, quae per fidem videmus et nobis ostenduntur, sunt ipsa facies et visio dei, sicut dicit: 'Haec est vita aeterna, ut cognoscant te solum' etc, 'Et ostendam ei meiupsum'; et Apostolus 'Videbimus eum, sicuti est'."

of the Tabernacle. Namely, Luther clarifies in the scholia of the Vatican Fragments that, when the Psamist says regarding faith “it is sealed (*signatum*)”, this “indicates that it is concealed and closed with regard to the latter veil, though it is light with regard to the first veil”. Faith is thus the reality between merely carnal vision and the heavenly vision. It opens a reality that is closed for carnal people and is light with regard to the first veil. Nevertheless, there are things which are still hidden from faith behind the second veil. In the same scholion Luther also states quite paradoxically that “faith is a possession or faculty of non-present, future things”.<sup>585</sup> One the one hand they are possessed and seen; on the other hand, they still remain in the future glory. Thus one can gather from Luther’s texts that the concept of faith as “sign” and “sealed” points to two things. First, that even faith follows the Christological principle of being hidden under its opposite; and second, that there is a difference between faith and the eschatological vision, even though faith already has an initial grasp of divine reality. The text is vague, however, on the exact nature of this difference. Its nature will be analysed further below.

Also the manner in which faith shows that divine reality is discussed to some degree in the scholia. Luther criticizes the interpretations suggesting that the Psalm speaks about *synthesis*, an inexhaustible light of the reason. That this is not the case is clear, says Luther, because the need to ask the question “Who will show us good?” demonstrates that those who ask it do not have that light.<sup>586</sup> The light spoken of in the Psalm 4 is the light of faith, and as the light of the face of God it does not show visible things but invisible good; it is the light which leads the faithful through temptations and tribulations. The good things it shows enlarge the heart and give it internal joy in the midst of external sorrows.<sup>587</sup> The same idea of faith as showing the spiritual good continues in the 1516 replacement scholia of the *Dictata*. Luther states in them as well that faith always has joy accompanying it: it is light to the intellect and joy to the will. It is also precisely this context in which Luther quotes the so-called Platonic principle of the good: The divine light gives joy to the will, because the good is self-diffusing (*bonum est diffusivum sui*).<sup>588</sup>

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<sup>585</sup> AWA 1, 511, 12-21: “Quod ait *signatum*, indicat, quod sit signum et clausum adhuc novissimo velamen, licet sit *lumen* ad primum velamen. Ac per hoc recte Apostolus eam dicit ‘Argumentum non apparentium’, id est, signum et indicium rerum, non res ipsae.’ ... Hoc alibi dicit ‘sperandum rerum substantiam’, id est, possessionem seu facultatem non praesentium, sed futurarum rerum esse fidem. Qui enim credit, habet et possidet res sperandas, et est substantia eius apud deum per fidem.”

<sup>586</sup> AWA 1, 511, 4-10.

<sup>587</sup> AWA 1, 511, 21 – 512, 15: “Differunt autem *lumen vultus* et lumen dorsi: *Lumen vultus* est agnitio spiritus sive spiritualis intelligentiae, quae deus cognoscitur per fidem; lumen dorsi est agnitio litterae occidentis, quae potius tenebra est, qua Christus solum homo cognoscitur et scriptura, immo omnis creatura carnaliter astimatur secundum hominem, Hic ‘Ostendam eis dorsum et non faciem’. ‘Nos autem’, 2. Cor 3, ‘revelata facie gloriam domini speculantes transformamur a claritate in claritatem’. Igitur qui in adversitatibus et passionibus vult stare, opus habet fide, qua visibilia contemnat, intentus in invisibili, ne et ipse in tempore tentationis recedens dicat cum illis: ‘Quis ostendit nobis bona?’ et cesset sacrificare ‘sacrificium iustitiae’, set potius gaudeat praesentia sibi per crucem et passionis auferri, quorum ablatio est collation aeternorum iis, qui credunt et spirant. Ideo sequitur: *Dedisti laetitiam in corde meo*, quasi dicat: Licet in corpore meo et vetere homine tristitiam des auferens temporalia, tamen in eadem ‘tribulatione dilates mihi’ sive laetitiam cordis mihi retribuisti in spe futurorum. Infelix enim laetitia in carne concessa, exclusa cruce.”

<sup>588</sup> WA 55, II, 80, 28 – 82, 2: “Nos autem non sic, Domine, Sed confitemur tibi, quia indigemus [29] ostensore bonorum et ex nobis non videmus ista bona. Sed lumen [30] vultus tui (i. e. fides, per quam cognoscimus faciem tuam et gloriam [31] tuam) signatum est (i. e. signum factum, nondum autem res, quia [32] ‘fides est argumentum rerum’, non autem ipse res) super nos (i. e.) [1] desursum: quia ‘omne donum

Thus here also we can see a link to Bonaventure, who taught that the divine light impresses in the soul the concepts of being and goodness, which happens through the immediate contact with God who is being and goodness.<sup>589</sup> But unlike Bonaventure, Luther attributes this function only to the light of faith, not to a light known by all as the first principle. In understanding the light as not known to all, but only to those who turn towards it and seek it, Luther exhibits (as noted above) the influence of Augustine's *Confessions*, to which Luther points at also in these later scholia, as he does already at the earliest glosses of the *Dictata*.<sup>590</sup>

Luther's final commentary on the Psalm 4 of the period between 1513 and 1521 appears in the *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519-21). This text is the lengthiest of Luther's expositions and it contains many interesting issues. Luther renders the Psalm verses here in a slightly different way than previously: "*Many say: Who will show us a good sign over us? The light of your face, O Lord.*" The focus is thus on faith as constituting "a good sign". According to Luther, again, there is a contradiction between visible good signs and faith. The Jews and the unbelievers seek a visible sign of visible good, but the only sign given is faith. It is in reality the only true good sign as only it can be a certain sign of future goods.<sup>591</sup> Why? Because the presence of God is conveyed by faith itself. Luther explains:

Faith is best called the light of the face of God, which is divine illumination of our mind and a kind of ray of divinity infused in the heart of the believer, by which everyone who will be saved is directed and protected, as is described in Ps. 31: 'I will give you understanding [*intellectum*] and instruct you on the way you are travelling; I will fix my eyes upon you' and Ps. 43: 'They did not seize the land with their sword and it was not their arm that saved them, but your right hand and your arm and the illumination of your face'; as well as Ps. 88: 'Lord, they walk in your light'. Of this, Ps. 26 rejoices: 'The Lord is my light and my salvation'.

The pillar of fire and cloud by which the sons of Israel were guided and led through the desert is an image of this. In the same way we are led unknown ways deserted of any human help, that is, through passions and tribulations. But as then the pillar was present

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desursum est', et fides est super omnem [2] sensum sursum; hoc est enim 'lumen', in quo 'ostenduntur nobis bona'). [3] Sic enim ostendis faciem tuam et ostendis nobis omne bonum. Ex qua [4] ostensione in memoria et intellectu facta non potest voluntas continere, [5] quin gaudeat, Quia omne bonum letificat appetitum, cum sit eius [6] 4, 7b proprium obiectum. Ideo sequitur: Dedisti letitiam in corde meo. [7] letatus sum, inquit, in hiis, que dicta sunt mihi, dicta scil. per [8] ostensionem huius luminis. Sic Zacharias audiuit verba bona et consolatoria, [9] quia 'ostendit' Dominus populo suo 'bonum'. Sic itaque fides [10] semper habet comitem letitiam in spiritu sancto. Vnde hic dicit: 'in [11] corde meo', i. e. spiritu, non in carne mea, que est impiorum, qui diligunt [12] vanitatem. Sic iam sunt omnia salua in spiritu, Memoria, intellectus: [13] quia 'lumen' quoad intellectum 'Signatum', i. e. firmiter impressum [14] signum, 'letitia' quoad Voluntatem. Non solum autem in se, Sed quia [15] bonum est diffusivum sui. Si 'Multi' sunt, qui 'dicunt: quis ostendit [1] nobis bona?' cur non etiam multi sint, super quos 'signatum est hoc [2] 3, 58 lumen' boni ostensium, quibus 'brachium Domini | reuelatum est'?"

<sup>589</sup> See *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* V, 1-2; VI, 1-2.

<sup>590</sup> WA 55, II, 75, 25 – 76, 1: "[25] Ostenso itaque filiis hominum vero saluatore Sequenter instruit eos [26] ad veram penitentiam et pulcherrime eam describit. Et si bene inspexeris, [27] Omnis qui cepit agnoscere Christum et veritatem, mox incipit detestari [28] suam vanitatem. Sicut hunc locum egregie exponit b. August[inus] li. 8. [29] confess[i]onum per experientiam propriam; antequam enim Scimus Sanctum [30] Dei, in vanitate transimus. Sed cum illuxerit nobis Dominus, tanto [1] fedius detestatur vanitatem preteritam, quanto clarius Scimus Christum."

<sup>591</sup> AWA 2, 198, 3 – 199, 30.



and travelled before their faces, so now faith has a God who is present, so that the illumination of the heart proceeds as from the face of the God who is present, so that it is rightly and most properly the light of the face of God, that is, knowledge of and trust in the God who is present. For he who does not know or feel that God is present for him does not yet believe, does not yet have the light of the face of God.

It does not matter whether the light of the face of God is understood actively, in that he himself illumines us with his presence when he kindles faith – or passively as the light of faith itself, by which we with trust, feel and believe his face and presence. For ‘Face’ and ‘countenance’ signify presence in the Scriptures, as is known. They are the same and both are at the same time: the illuminating God and the illuminated heart, God seen by us and God who is present.<sup>592</sup>

Here Luther confirms in the strongest terms his understanding of faith as divine illumination. For Luther, faith is ontologically divine light: It is immediate illumination proceeding from the “face” (i.e., presence) of the present God; a radiance of divinity. As Luther says in another place in the *Operationes*, it is an infused theological virtue, the subject, object and other qualities of which are wholly divine.<sup>593</sup> It is therefore not a created supernatural *habitus*, but immediate contact with the divine. Faith is ontologically an union of soul, or mind, with God which brings with it the feeling (*sensus*), trust (*fiducia*) and knowledge (*agnitio*) of God, who is at the same time present in faith as the source of the light of faith, as well as the light itself in which the source is known. Furthermore, as Luther illustrates with images of the Exodus, faith functions as the understanding or intellect which leads and directs believers through the tribulations and afflictions of this life. It accomplishes this function most of all by showing the believer the real and true good (God) who is all and every good (*omne bonum*). As as an such inestimable good, he stands in contrast to all created and visible things.<sup>594</sup> Thus according

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<sup>592</sup> AWA 2, 200, 3 – 201, 21. “Optime autem vocatur fides *lumen vultus dei*, quod sit illuminatio mentis nostrae divinitus inspirata et radius quidam divinitatis in cor credentis infusus, quo dirigitur et servatur, quicumque servatur; qualiter Ps. 31<8> describitur: ‘Intellectum tibi dabo et instruam te in via hac, qua ambulabis; firmabo super te oculos meos’, et Ps. 43<4>: ‘Non enim in gladio suo possederunt terram, et brachium eorum non salvavit eos, sed dextera tua et brachium tuum et illuminatio vultus tui.’; item Ps. 88<16>: ‘Domine, in lumine vultus tui ambulabunt’. Hinc gaudet Ps 26<1>: ‘Dominus illuminatio mea et salus mea’.

Hoc figuratum est in columna ignis et nube, quibus filii Israel regebantur et ducebantur per desertum. <Ex 13,22> Sic enim sola fide ducimur per vias ignotas ac desertas omnium homilium auxilio, hoc est, passionibus et tribulationibus. Atque ut illic columna praesens ante faciem eorum ibat, ita hic fides praesentem deum habet, ut velut a vultu praesentis dei illuminatio cordis procedat, ita ut rectissime et propriissime *lumen vultus dei*, id est, agnitio et fiducia praesentis dei sit. Qui enim praesentem sibi deum non novit aut non sentit, nondum credit, nondum habet *lumen vultus dei*.

Nihil ergo refert, sive lumen vultus dei intelligatur active, quo nos ipse presentia sua illuminat fidem accendens, sive passive ipsum lumen fidei, quo nos cum fiducia vultum et praesentiam eius sentimus et credimus – nam ‘facies’ seu ‘vultus’ in sacris litteris praesentiam significat, ut notum est. Idem enim est et utrumque simul est: deus illuminans et cor illuminatum, deus visus a nobis et deus praesens.”

<sup>593</sup> See AWA 2, 292, 1 – 293,11; 317, 6 - 318, 19. See also Schwarz 1962, 40-42.

<sup>594</sup> AWA 2, 202, 11-20: “Videmus, quod sit *signum bonum super nos*, seu *quis ostendit nobis bonum*: Fides, inquam, haec, quia est lumen, quod praesentem et vultum ipsum dei ostendit, omne bonum nimirum ostendit, quod deus est, dum ipsum ante nos statuit et fiduciam in ipsum format. Itaque non est hominis erudire hominem. Iam facile erit concinnare alias interpretationes. Communis proxima est huic sensui: *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, domine*. Dum illi quaerunt, quis ostendit nobis bona, volentes ea praesenter videre potius quam credere, hic non optat ostendi, sed gloriatur *lumen vultus dei* – id est, notitiam

to Luther it is only the light of faith through which the true good and the true first principles of morals can be known. This knowledge is not accessible to the light of the natural reason, which has turned away from God. Luther writes:

So it is demonstrated, that this verse cannot be understood about the syntheresis of the natural reason, as is the opinion of many, that the first moral principles are known by means of themselves as in the speculative sciences [or: as in a mirror]. They are wrong. Faith is the first principle of all good works, but this is unknown to such an extent that all reason is extremely horrified by it. Reason with its highest powers says: Who will show us good? There are many who say so; that is, all who are directed by reason.<sup>595</sup>

Luther's criticism seems to be directed first of all against Nicholas of Lyra. According to Nicholas's comments on the Psalm 4 in his *Biblia cum glossis*, the first principles are known by means of themselves with the light of the natural reason sufficiently for the works of righteousness.<sup>596</sup> In this view, suggested by many theologians of the *via moderna*, justification by loving God above all by purely natural means without grace is possible.<sup>597</sup> Luther likewise rejects the common epistemological view of the *via moderna*, that God is unknown for the *viator* and that the first principles of speculative and practical reason are known by means of themselves, not by divine illumination. Even the view of Thomas Aquinas seems to fall under Luther's condemnation: according to Thomas the divine light is natural reason's participation in the eternal law. Thus natural reason is able to discern what is good and evil. On the other hand, Luther's passage about faith as an infused virtue is closer to Thomas, but the concept is used also in the Franciscan tradition. The main differences between Luther and Thomas seem to be Luther's understanding of faith as ontologically divine, not only a habit and a created similitude. Faith grasps God as its object in a more immediate manner than in Thomas's view. This divine character of faith is related to Luther's sharp criticism of the natural abilities of the human person.<sup>598</sup> Luther's main point against Thomas's interpretation of the Psalm 4 in the *Summa* seems to be his rejection of the idea that the human beings can know what is good and evil with their natural reason, so that there can be theologically good or meritorious works without faith. This is not possible in Luther's thought, because natural reason lacks the immediate cognition of divinity (i.e., God, the highest good) as he really is, not only as an abstract concept. As we have seen, Luther holds that natural reason does know the abstract properties of God. However, without the concrete and immediate knowledge provided by the light of faith, human love remains attached to finite, perishable created good things and becomes vain and perverted. Consequently, human love also creates a vain and

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et fiduciam praesentis dei, ut dictum est – signatum et impressum esse super ipsos, et satis patet intelligentia ex dictis.”

See also AWA 2, 206, 27 – 207, 13.

<sup>595</sup> AWA 2, 203, 3 – 204, 5: “Quo fit, ut hic versus nequeat intelligi de naturali ratione synderesi, sicut multorum habet opinio dicentium principia prima in moralibus esse per se nota sicut in speculabilibus. Falsa sunt haec. Fides est primum principium omnium bonorum operum, atque haec adeo incognita, ut omnis ratio summe eam exhorreat. Ratio in summis suis viribus constituta dicit: *Quis ostendit nobis bona?* Multi enim sic dicunt, id est, omnes, qui ratione ducuntur.”

<sup>596</sup> See Lyra as cited in AWA 2, 200 footnote 20 (text in footnote 564).

<sup>597</sup> See Oberman 1963, 153-154; 184.

<sup>598</sup> See Sth. Ia IIae q91 a2 co as cited in footnote 561.

perverted illusion of God as its object, imagining God to be qualitatively like the created objects known to it. Attached to this illusion it imagines that it knows God and does not need the light of faith to be righteous before him. It is important to note, however, that Luther's criticism of the insufficiency of the natural reason does not pertain to external acts, but only to the quality of the will and the reasoning of the intellect in relation to God: i.e., the moral intention. It pertains to the spirit and the heart, not to externally good works towards the neighbor, which Luther notes can be accomplished without faith, though not out of free and joyful love.<sup>599</sup>

As we have seen, Luther's interpretation of Ps. 4:7 is thoroughly rooted in the traditional interpretation history of the verse, although it also contains a strong contribution of his own. Luther explicitly mentions only Augustine as his source, but his concrete interpretation appears to be related also to those of Bonaventure and Gerson, as is indicated by the use of the Tabernacle figure. Also Luther's interpretation of the "light" of the Psalm as the light of faith appears to be in continuity with specific traditional interpretations. However, Luther highlights it and makes it his main point. Luther's concrete understanding of the nature of the light is connected to the Augustinian tradition represented as well by Bonaventure and Gerson. In the theology of these two the light itself is taken as divine. Luther's understanding, on the other hand, is at odds with the Thomist interpretation which makes the light a created light. Furthermore Luther draws a stark distinction between the light of reason and the light of faith. His main opponents appear to be those who read Psalm 4:7 as speaking of the light of natural reason: possibly Thomas, Nicholas of Lyra, and other Nominalists. Thus the general line of Luther's interpretation follows the medieval tradition, although it departs from it in the sense that the light is understood explicitly as and only as the light of faith. Nevertheless, through examination of Luther's interpretation of Ps 4:7 we can see that Luther's concept of the light of faith must be approached with the tradition of divine illumination as its immediate context and conceptual background. Luther's interpretation fits into that tradition and especially follows the line from Augustine to Bonaventure and Gerson. The interpretation of the light as faith is not unique. What is unique to Luther is his emphasis on the sharp conflict between the natural reason and the light of faith, as well as the resulting rejection of schemes of ascent.

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<sup>599</sup> See AWA 2, 40, 3 – 44, 17. See also chapters 2.4.1.2 and 2.4.1.3. Luther agrees that the human beings know the notion of God (*notitiam seu notionem divinitatis*) in an abstract sense. That is, they know the general properties of God (*potentem, Invisibilem, Iustum, immortalem, bonum*), which Luther also calls the major syllogism (of practical reason, i.e. the imperative that good is to be done). The problem is that because without faith they do not know God as he is (*veram notitiam de vera essentia*), which Luther takes as the minor syllogism of practical reason (what concretely is good; intuitive knowledge of God), they attribute the abstract notion of divinity to different created things and fall into idolatry. See WA 56, 15, 1-4; 176, 14 – 179, 25; Raunio 2001, 167-170.

### 3.3. The Functions of the Light of Faith

#### 3.3.1. The Light of Faith in Relation to God

##### 3.3.1.1 Faith as Actual and Direct Cognition and Union with Christ

Regarding the concrete operation of the light of faith as an instrument of understanding we can distinguish in Luther's commentaries four central features of the light of faith. These functions are distinguished from each other by their relation to the concepts of knowledge and good (and the respective capacities of intellect and affect), and by their relation to the God and the creation. The light of faith functions in relation to God as 1) as an incomprehensible light making the presence of God known (intellectual aspect or the aspect of knowledge); and 2) as a captivating light making the goodness of God experienced (affective aspect or the aspect of goodness). In relation to the creation, the light of faith functions as 3) the light of the intellect which gives understanding and shows the true content of things (intellectual aspect); and 4) as the light which directs and guides the affect of Christians and makes them able to internally obey the law of God and do good joyfully (affective aspect). We now turn to a closer examination of how these functions of the light of faith work, first in relation to God, then in relation to creation.

As is the case in the Augustinian tradition, Luther's concept of faith as the intellect includes both the active function of the intellect as the organ of understanding as well as the passive function of the intellect as that part of the mind which receives the divine light by which it understands. The term Luther uses for the mind, when it is turned towards God and illuminated by his presence (i.e., in the passive sense) is "face" (*facies*). The mind turned away from God is "backside" (*dorsum*). The terms include the connotations of both knowledge and presence.<sup>600</sup> Two especially precise definitions of the notion of *facies* appear in the *Dictata*. The first is found in the scholia, and according to it *facies* means the mind or the soul turned towards God through the intellect and affect by faith:

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<sup>600</sup> See WA 55, I, 243, 15 – 244, 1; gloss 11; 476 gloss 3; 568, 17-19; 569 gloss 6; 694 gloss 7; 798, 22-23; 840, 1-2; 882, 4-5; WA 55, II, 152, 23 – 153, 13; 208, 4 – 209, 9; 225, 28-32; 355, 11-20; 740, 8 – 741, 36; 780, 26-36; 783, 134-141; AWA 2, 201, 17 – 202, 10; 212, 20-23; 260, 11-20; WA 5, 388, 22-30; 638, 3-4; 464, 36 – 465, 16; 489, 31-35.

Common to all texts is that the term *facies* always signifies the knowledge of God under one form or another. Usually Luther interpretes the term *facies* as faith, but in some places it can also mean the divinity of Christ, the (capacity of) spiritual understanding of the Scripture, or the knowledge of God at the Last Judgment and in heaven (WA 55, II, 355, 11-20; 694 gloss 7; WA 5, 464, 36 – 465, 16). In WA 55, II, 780, 26-36 Luther distinguishes among three types of *facies*: the knowledge of God in Incarnation, faith, and second coming, calling even the knowledge of God in the humanity of Christ *facies* (when usually he refers to it as the *dorsum*).

See also the analysis of the text in Schwarz 1962, 118-122. Schwarz stresses the relationality of the concept. See also Metzger 1964, 74-80, who emphasizes the existential orientation of the whole person. However, Metzger also analyses the idea of ascent (*Stufenschema*) and the concept of *mens* in Gerson, noting that Gerson speaks of the illumination of the mind by God. According to Metzger both Luther and Gerson emphasize the affective nature of the cognition, and in this sense they stand closer to each other, so that Luther can be seen as accepting ideas from Gerson.

Our face is our mind, i.e. (according to Jean Gerson) the soul turned towards God with its intellect and affect [which properly happens by true faith]. [...] And on the contrary our backside is the soul turned away from God with its intellect and affect [which happens by unbelief]. Our ‘face’ seeks God in this way, because God cannot be sought except by the intellect and affect that are turned towards him. And in the same way the ‘face’ of God is his recognition and goodwill towards us, as well as his backside is his anger and ignorance towards us in front of him, as he says through Jeremiah: ‘I will show them my backside and not my face’. And Matthew 25: ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’ As is the habit of those who are angered, to turn their face away and their back towards, as well as the habit of those who love, to show their face and to recognize [*agnoscere*] those who are close to them. In this way also blessed Gregory explains that ‘face’ means recognition [*notitia*] in the first Homily on Ezekiel.<sup>601</sup>

As can be seen, Luther refers in the definition given here to the late medieval mystic Jean Gerson as his source. This reference recalls the passages of Gerson in which faith especially is considered the light of the face of God, and his definitions of the vision of God by faith.<sup>602</sup> The second definition found in the glosses is quite similar, but even more precise in defining the nature of this facial knowledge:

Gloss 11: Our mind is our ‘face’, our senses are our backside, because through the senses we turn towards creatures, through the mind towards God. But if we turn our mind towards creatures, then we turn our ‘face’ away from God and turn our back to him. Indeed, in the most proper sense mind is the actual knowledge [and direct knowledge] of the soul [*ipsa actualis notitia* [et *directa notitia*] anime], or at least on account of it the soul is called ‘mind’. I say both intellective and affective knowledge, according to devout doctors. Moreover, mind is not called ‘face’ unless it is illumined and able to know God [*noscibilis*], which happens through the cognition [*cognitio*] of God. According to Gregory, ‘face’ namely means knowledge [*notitia*].<sup>603</sup>

<sup>601</sup> WA 55, II, 152, 23 – 153, 13: “[23] 26, 8.9 **Facies** nostra Est mens nostra, i. e. (secundum Iohann. Gerson) Anima [24] per intellectum et affectum ad Deum conuersa [quod fit proprie per [1] fidem veram]. [[Vnde secundum prophetam ‘facies Iudeorum redacte [2] sunt in ollam’, Iohel. 2. ‘Et facies omnium sicut nigredo olle’, Naum 2., [3] quod de Christianis nomine tantum dictum.]] Econtra dorsum nostrum [4] est Anima per intellectum et affectum a Deo auersa [quod fit [5] per incredulitatem]. Sic ergo ‘facies’ nostra exquirat Deum, quia non [6] potest Deus queri nisi per intellectum et affectum ad eum conuersos. [7] Eodem modo et ‘facies’ Dei Est agnitio eius et beneplacitum ad nos, [8] Dorsum autem est Indignatio et Ignorantia nostri coram eo. Sicut [9] per Ierem[iam] dicit: ‘Ostendam eis Dorsum et non faciem.’ Et Matt. [10] 25.: ‘Amen dico vobis, nescio vos’. Quia solent facie auersa dorsum [11] ostendere et velut nolle agnoscere, qui indignantur, Et econtra faciem [12] ostendere et agnoscere, qui amant et propicii sunt. Sic et b. Gre[gorius] [13] Exponit ‘faciem’ pro Notitia, omilia 1. super Ezechie.”

<sup>602</sup> See the analysis of Gerson in chapters 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. Schwarz 1962, 417-420 attempts to trace the notion back to Gerson’s definition of the experiential and affective (i.e., mystical) knowledge, but it appears that the source of Luther’s definition is not to be located in the anagogical (i.e., mystical) vision of God, but that it comes closer to the *visio facialis & intuitiva*.

<sup>603</sup> WA 55, I, 242 gloss 11: “GLOSSA:<sup>11)</sup> [21]Mens nostra Est ‘facies’ nostra, Sensus autem est dorsum nostrum. [22]Quia per sensum vertimur ad creaturas, per mentem ad Deum. Si autem [23]mentem etiam ad creaturas vertimus, tunc auertimus ‘faciem’ a Deo [24]et dorsum ei vertimus. Veruntamen proprie Mens Est ipsa actualis [25]notitia [et *directa notitia*] anime, vel saltem ab ipsa vocatur anima [26]‘mens’. Notitia inquam tam intellectiua quam affectiua secundum [27]doctores deuotarios. Immo Mens non dicitur ‘facies’,

This passage is quite exceptional in its terminological precision. Luther's use of the word "mind" (*mens*) connects him to the anthropological tradition stemming at least from Augustine, a tradition which employs the term for the highest part of the soul that grasps the invisible and intellectual objects.<sup>604</sup> According to this passage the mind is called "face" (*facies*) when and only when it is illumined (*illustrata*) by God, through which illumination it acquires the capacity to know God, and becomes *noscibilis Deo*. Furthermore, this cognition of God is direct and actual knowledge (*actualis ... et directa notitia animae*). It is not habitual or indirect knowledge by means of another medium. It is very clear that here Luther takes God to be the immediate and direct object of cognition. Although Luther does not use the term intuitive cognition, it is nevertheless quite evident from this text that Luther in his definition rejects the *via moderna*'s disqualification of divine illumination and direct cognition of God, and agrees that God can in this life become the immediate and actual object of cognition. Luther's reference to Gregory the Great should not be taken to mean that Gregory is the primary source of his opinion, as the definition in the *Moralia* is very brief mention.<sup>605</sup> It seems rather that Luther's understanding stems from the meaning of the notion *facialis*, which in the late medieval context commonly stands for immediate and direct knowledge. In his *Summa in totam physicen*, Luther's teacher Jodocus Trutfetter calls defines cognition as "intuitive or facial" (*intuitiva sive facialis*), that from which experiential cognition begins.<sup>606</sup> The same term is also used by Gerson (to whom Luther refers alongside Gregory in his definition of *facies*) to describe the nature of the immediate and intuitive knowledge of God, the *visio Dei facialis & intuitiva* (as noted in the previous chapters of this study). Also Luther's mention of "devout doctors" (*doctores deuotarios*) may be a reference to Gerson, although it might also be a more general nod toward authors who define the nature of mystical, spiritual or intellectual knowledge of God in similar terms.<sup>607</sup> What is clear is that here Luther expresses a view deeply consonant with the traditional pre-Scotist understanding of divine intellectual illumination, in which God is taken as the immediate object of cognition. For Luther, this knowledge of God is already actualized in this life through faith. Furthermore, as we have already noted, Luther links the concept of this actual and direct knowledge and the face of God (both of the terms *vultus* and *facies*) to the divine light, thus confirming the dependence of his view on the traditional interpretation of Ps. 4. To know God face-to-face is to know God in, through, and by the divine light, by which the immediate and direct knowledge of present God is impressed on the mind.<sup>608</sup> With

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nisi quando est [28]illustrata et noscibilis Deo facta, quod fit per cognitionem Dei; per [29]'faciem' enim Notitia secundum Gregorium intelligitur."

The brackets ([ ]) signify linear and marginal glosses to the original gloss; i.e., Luther has refined the definition by adding the phrase *et directa notitia* after the first writing.

<sup>604</sup> The interchangeable use of the terms "mind" and "soul" occurs also elsewhere in the *Dictata*, as observed in chapter 2.4.1.1 and on p. 99. On Augustine's use of these terms, see Nash 2003, 63-64.

<sup>605</sup> "Per faciem quippe solet notitia designari. Unde scriptum est: *Et facies mea praecedet te*, id est notitia ducatum praebabit." *Moralium sive Expositio in Job* 34 c 3 n 5 (PL 76, 719C).

<sup>606</sup> "Seipso immediate dicit. Intuitiva sive facialis' Et ab illa incipit cognitio experimentalis." Trutfetter: *Summa in totam physicen*, libr. VIII, tr. I c II de potentia intellectiva.

<sup>607</sup> In addition to Gerson, Luther could be referring to Bonaventure. See chapters 3.2.1. and 3.2.2.

<sup>608</sup> WA 55, II, 355, 11-14: "[11] Facies Domini primo Est reuelatio eius siue notitia eius, qua [12] cognoscitur esse Dominus. Et hoc est lumen vultus eius Psal. 4. et psalmo [13] precedenti: 'Illuminet vultum suum super nos.' Secundo est ipsa gratiosa [14] diuinitas anagogice, sicut illud fides eiusdem.

respect to God the “face” and the “light” stand for divinity: God as the active and illuminating principle. They stand for Christ as the ray of divinity, the light and splendor who illumines the believer by making him participate nascently in the divine light. With respect to the believer, the “face” stands for the mind or spirit, the passive receptive capacity, which is illuminated and made divine through faith, which is itself the same divine light in the passive and received sense.<sup>609</sup>

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Nam qui Christum [15] 67, 3 nondum Dominum credit, nondum habet lumen vultus eius necdum **periit** [16] **a facie eius**. Quia tam salubriter quam seueriter ‘peritur a facie eius’: [17] Salubriter in hac vita. Tercio Est reuelatio eius in extremo Iudicio, [18] vbi peribunt inimici eius horribiliter. Quarto est ipse intellectus [19] mysticus in Scrip[tura de Christo, de quo supra Psal. 4.”

See also WA 55, I, 22, 3 – 24, 2; 608, 11-13; 609 gloss 19; 789, 22-23; WA 55, II, 80, 28, 29-31; 783, 134-141; AWA 1, 493, 10-18; AWA 2, 201, 11 – 202, 20; WA 5, 388, 22-30; 506, 20-25; 508, 36 – 509, 6.

<sup>609</sup> WA 55, I, 358, 12-16: “**Et**<sup>9</sup> sic **introibo** per veram fidem in spiritu **ad altare** Christi sacramentum et participationem **dei** non Mosi : **ad deum qui loetificat** quia ‘gaudium est fructus spiritus’, Gal. 5. **iuuentutem meam** i. e. nouitatem meam, que fit per gratiam fidei, quando ‘nascimur ex Deo’ ‘ex aqua et s[piritu] s[ancto]’”

WA 55, I, 476 gloss 11, 1-5: “GLOSSA:<sup>3</sup> /In Christo humanitas ‘dorsum’ nominatur [1]{Isaie 30.: ‘Aures tuę [3]audient verbum post tergum monentis’, i. e. Dei in carne loquentis./ [2]Ierem. 18.: ‘Dorsum [4]ostendam iis et non faciem’.}[5]Diuinitas autem ‘facies’.”

WA 55, I, 568, 17-19: “**Deus conuertere nos** scil. a nobis ad te per fidem **et ostende** reuela nobis **faciem tuam**<sup>6</sup> Diuinitatem”

WA 55, I, 569 gloss 6, 1-5: “GLOSSA:<sup>6</sup> [1]ostendit autem faciem dupliciter: primo in fide. Et sic Christum vt [2]hominem videre est posteriora seu dorsum eius videre, Vt Deum autem [3]Est faciem eius videre. Secundo in clara visione. Et ita nunc ‘salui sumus [4]in spe’, tunc autem in re. Est autem humanitas Christi dorsum siue [5]posterius eius, Et diuinitas facies eius”

WA 55, I, 608, 11-12: “**Domine** Deus pater **in lumine** que est fides et cognitio **vultus tui** diuinitatis et spiritus”

WA 55, I, 608 gloss 14: “GLOSSA:<sup>14</sup> ‘Thabor’ interpretatur Veniens lumen, ‘Hermon’ anathema. Vtrunque est Ecclesia, que secundum spiritum est ‘lumen de lumine’ Christo veniens, Secundum carnem excommunicata, crucifixa et abiecta, et in vtroque eleuata et magnificata per totum mundum.”

WA 55, I, 624, 21-23: “**Et sit splendor domini dei nostri** ‘lumen’ cognitionis Dei, quod est fides Christi, psal. 4. **super nos** quia est desursum et supra nos”

WA 55, I, 694 gloss 7, 1-3: “GLOSSA:<sup>7</sup> [1]Sepe dictum est, Quod ‘facies’ Domini [2]{Anagoge est, diuinitas Christi/ [3]{tropolo[gice est agnitio et fides diuinitatis Christi/”

WA 55, I, 744, 10-14: “**Exortum est** ortu spirituali in die pasche **in tenebris** spiritualibus cordium 4, 248 **lumen** Christus, i. e. fides Christi **rectis**<sup>2</sup>. **Heth**. lumen inquam, quod est ipse Dominus”

WA 55, II, 355, 11-14: “[11] Facies Domini primo Est reuelatio eius siue notitia eius, qua [12] cognoscitur esse Dominus. Et hoc est lumen vultus eius Psal. 4. et psal[mo] [13] preced[enti]: ‘Illuminet vultum suum super nos.’ Secundo est ipsa gratiosa [14] diuinitas anagoge, sicut illud fides eiusdem.”

WA 55, II, 443, 279, 444-286: “Sic Ecclesia, luna spiritualis, ‘auferetur’, Quando secundum corpus [280] fulgebit sicut sol, Et secundum animam, qua iam fide fulget, fulgebit in [281] clara visione Dei. Quę visio excedit fidei claritatem septies et amplius. Interim [282] autem, donec Est media parte sui (i. e. secundum spiritum per fidem) [283] clara, que est radius a sole Christo in eam descendens, Et altera [284] parte sui (i. e. secundum corpus) obscura, semper oritur Iustitia et abundantia[285] pacis. Sic enim 1. Corin. 13.: ‘Cum venerit, quod perfectum est, euacuabitur, [286] quod ex parte est.’”

WA 55, II, 715, 484-488: “Sicut enim Christo contigit [485] in persona, qui est obiectum, fons, origo et Sol Iustitię, [486] veritatis et salutis: ita fit et radiis, riuus, [487] speciebus ab eo pendentibus et fluentibus. Simul sol cum [488] radiis oritur et occidit etc.”

AWA 2, 201, 16-21: “Nihil ergo refert, sive lumen vultus dei intelligatur active, quo nos ipse presentia sua illuminat fidem accendens, sive passive ipsum lumen fidei, quo nos cum fiducia vultum et praesentiam eius sentimus et credimus – nam ‘facies’ seu ‘vultus’ in sacris litteris praesentiam significat, ut notum est. Idem enim est et utrumque simul est: deus illuminans et cor illuminatum, deus visus a nobis et deus praesens.”

See also WA 56, 298, 21 – 299, 27 as well as the texts in chapter 3.2.3. In addition, Peura 1994, 200-203 analyses the ontological nature of faith as illumination. The noetic or cognitive nature of faith, on the contrary, is left unexplored in his work.

In many places Luther emphasizes this interplay of the divine activity and the believer's passive receptivity.<sup>610</sup> On one hand this emphasis is connected to the Aristotelian theory of perception and the functioning of the intellect, according to which the intellect first must be in a passive state in order to receive the form it is to understand.<sup>611</sup> Likewise, according to Luther the old form of the believer (the form of the flesh) must be abandoned in order for the form of Christ, or form of the Word, to be received. Luther speaks of this rejection of the old form and reception of the new in terms of transformation: the flesh, or the believer, becomes the Word.<sup>612</sup> This is one way of expressing the idea of union with Christ in faith, through which the believer shares in the divine properties and even in the being (*esse*) of God. This being is the progression of the Word from the Father that the spiritual birth of the Christian reflects.<sup>613</sup> Aristotle also uses the metaphor of a wax seal impressed with the image of a signet ring to describe the passivity of the senses in their reception of the form; if the wax is not be soft and devoid of previous impressions, it cannot receive the image.<sup>614</sup> Luther, probably referring to this metaphor, writes in one place that a hard heart does not receive the image of a signet ring, but wax, which is softened by the Word, becomes soft to God and clings to God by faith, does. Faith, which is the sponsal tie between them, makes the believer one spirit with God and the Word, who is the Son.<sup>615</sup>

On the other hand, the image of the seal comes interestingly close to the central image of the Augustinian tradition's interpretation of Ps. 4:7. According to Augustine the light of the face of God impresses on the soul the image of God in a manner analogous to a coin which is stamped with the image of a king.<sup>616</sup> In *De Trinitate* Augustine also employs the image of a signet ring and wax in describing how moral regulations are imprinted on the heart by the eternal light.<sup>617</sup> The metaphors of these two traditions appear to come together

<sup>610</sup> See e.g. WA 55, II, 747, 2-5; WA 56, 227, 18-19; WA 57, a31 gloss 2; a89, 20 – a90, 8; a93, 20 – a94, 12; WA 2, 539, 1-18; AWA 2, 201, 16 – 202, 6.

<sup>611</sup> See Aristotle: *De anima* III, 4 (429a, 10 – 429b, 9); WA 56, 374, 12-14; Cranz 2000, 162-164; Dieter 2001, 271-275; Vainio 2010, 141-143. Cranz, Dieter and Vainio note Luther's use of the Aristotelian theory to illustrate the union with Christ. The problem with Vainio's article is that it is limited to the former, missing the influence of the Augustinian theory of illumination and the Platonist epistemology connected to it. Dieter's study is as well focused on Luther's reception of Aristotle.

<sup>612</sup> WA 1, 28, 25 – 29, 31; WA 55, I, 62 gloss 1; WA 56, 329, 27 – 330, 5; WA 2, 548, 20-29.

<sup>613</sup> See WA 2, 536, 28-31; AWA 2, 255, 11 – 259, 14; Mannerman 1994, 43-53. See also chapter 2.2.1.

<sup>614</sup> Aristotle: *De anima* II, 12 (424a, 17-24).

<sup>615</sup> WA 57, b151, 1-17: "[1] Notandum eciam, quod 'obduracio' hoc loco omnis prorsus intelligitur [2] difficultas ad credendum. Nam ut solet Hebrea lingua pulcherrimis [3] uti methaphoris, 'obduracio' idem significat, quod 'indisposicio' seu [4] 'ineptitudo', sumpta methaphora a cera, que, dura cum fuerit, impaciens [5] est figure sigilli, mollis autem in omnia facile formatur. Ita cor hominis [6] inter 4 terminos versatur. Dum enim adheret Deo, per verbum [7] natura liquescit, mollescit Deo et durescit creature, dum vero adheret [8] creature, durescit Deo et mollescit creature. Semper ergo cor humanum [9] est tum durum tum molle diversorum respectu. Hec autem adhesio est [10] ipsa fides verbi, imo illa copula desponsacionis, de qua Osee 2. dicit: [11] 'Et sponsabo te mihi in fide', secundum illud 1. ad Corin. 7.: 'Qui adheret [12] Deo, unus spiritus est.' || 'Sequitur captivus amantem' || [13] Corollarie sequitur, quod fides Christi est omnis virtus et incredulitas [14] omne viciu, ut satis ex dictis patet. Quia per fidem fit homo [15] similis verbo Dei, verbum autem est filius Dei. Ita autem efficitur, ut sit [16] filius Dei omnis, qui credit in eum, Io. 1., ac per hoc sine omni peccato [17] plenusque omni virtute."

<sup>616</sup> See Ebeling 1989, 329 and apparatus to AWA 2, 200 (footnote 20).

<sup>617</sup> *De Trin.* XIV, 15, 21 (PL 42, 1052). See also Nash 2003, 104.



in the interpretation of the word *signatum* in Psalm 4:7.<sup>618</sup> Both of them signify a union which takes place simultaneously at an ontological and epistemological level. In knowing God, the knowing subject must become like God, the object of knowledge. God himself is the epistemological principle by which he himself is known. Luther confirms this explicitly by stating that the Platonic principle of knowledge “like is known by like” (*simile simili cognosci*) is right, and that the believer must become divinized to know God.<sup>619</sup> He must be united with God and share in his properties. Luther speaks of this union in terms of participation, new birth from God, being transformed into the Word of God, being inhabited by grace and ruled by Christ, being made one spirit with Christ, being transformed from humanity to divinity.<sup>620</sup> The image of God is thus an ontological image in the soul, the reflection of God, Christ, the Word and the ray of divinity, who illumines the mind of the believer and is itself the light of faith. To be an image of God means ontological participation in the divine light (i.e., Christ) although this participation is incipient and not yet perfect. It is interior and hidden, received by the spiritual man, whose only work is the act of the reception of the *imago Dei* in the spirit. It is only this

<sup>618</sup> WA 55, I, 22, 3 – 24, 2: “**Multi** sapientes, fortes, Sancti in oculis suis **dicunt quis ostendit nobis** [4] **bona** q. d. nos ipsi scimus, ‘tu nos doces?’ Iohann. 6. Nolumus fidei [5] 3, 39 ostensionem: Ideo, quia nolunt, Ecce [4, 7] **signatum est** signo fixe | impressum [6] **super nos** |<sup>2</sup> qui non sumus de illis ‘multis’ **lumen** bonorum [1] ostensium fides **vultus** |<sup>3</sup> **tui** diunitatis vel spiritus **domine** illis autem [2] dorsi tui tantum ostenditur lux.”

WA 55, II, 81, 9 – 82, 2: “Sic itaque fides [10] semper habet comitem letitiam in spiritu sancto. Vnde hic dicit: ‘in [11] corde meo’, i. e. spiritu, non in carne mea, que est impiorum, qui diligunt [12] vanitatem. Sic iam sunt omnia salua in spiritu, Memoria, intellectus: [13] quia ‘lumen’ quoad intellectum ‘Signatum’, i. e. firmiter impressum [14] signum, ‘letitia’ quoad Voluntatem. Non solum autem in se, Sed quia [15] bonum est diffusivum sui. Si ‘Multi’ sunt, qui ‘dicunt: quis ostendit [1] nobis bona?’ cur non etiam multi sint, super quos ‘signatum est hoc [2] 3, 58 lumen’ boni ostensium, quibus ‘brachium Domini | reuelatum est?’”

AWA 2, 202, 18-20: “Communis proxima est huic sensui: *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, domine*. Dum illi quaerunt, quis ostendit nobis bona, volentes ea praesenter videre potius quam credere, hic non optat ostendi, sed gloriatur *lumen vultus dei* – id est, notitiam et fiduciam praesentis dei, ut dictum est – signatum et impressum esse super ipsos, et satis patet intelligentia ex dictis.”

<sup>619</sup> See WA 57, a93, 20 – a94, 12: “[20] **Formetur in vobis** [4, 19]. [21] Magis placuit Apostolo dicere: ‘donec formetur Christus in vobis’ [22] quam: donec ego formem Christum in vobis. In quo ostendit se plus [23] tribuere gratie Dei quam operi suo, dum velut mater eos tanquam rude [24] semen in utero cordis sui portat, donec spiritus formet eos, sicut mater [25] carnis portat informe semen, donec per manum Dei formetur in foetum. [26] Nec dixit: donec vos formemini in Christum, sed: ‘donec formetur [27] Christus in vobis’. Et hoc ideo, quia, ut supra dixerat in 2. ca.: ‘Vivo [28] iam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus.’ Vita christiani non est ipsius, [29] sed Christi viventis in eo, ut 1. Cor. 6.: ‘Et non estis vestri, empti enim [1] estis precio magno.’

Hic etiam notandum est: Licet verum sit Christum [2] personaliter in nullo prorsus formari — ac sic glosa illa recta quidem est, [3] sc. fidem seu cognitionem Christi pro ‘Christo’ hic accipi atque intelligi —, [4] summe tamen cavendum est, ne ista cognitio accipiatur speculative, qua [5] Christus tantum obiective cognoscitur. Nam hec est mortua, et demones [6] adeo habent eam, ut miro studio fallant hereticos et superbos per illam. [7] Sed est accipienda ipsa practica, sc. vita, essentia et experientia ad exemplum [8] et imaginem Christi, ut iam Christus non sit obiectum nostre [9] cognitionis, sed nos pocius obiectum cognitionis eius, ut supra dixit: [10] ‘Nunc autem cum cognoveritis, immo cum cogniti sitis.’ Nam hoc est, [11] quod prius Deus est factus caro, quam caro fieret Deus. Ita oportet in [12] omnibus prius Deum incarnari, quam eos in Deo indivinari, et inde recte [13] habet illud Platonicum: ‘simile simili cognosci’.”

The precondition of this knowledge is the Incarnation, because God only approaches human beings through external means under which the divine reality is hidden. See chapter 2.4.2.1. See also Mannermaa 1994, 53-60.

<sup>620</sup> WA 55, I, 358, 12-16; WA 56, 227, 2-7; 374, 6-21; WA 2, 502, 11-14; 504, 4-13; WA 57, b19, 11 – b20, 2; b187, 4 – b188, 3; b231, 11 – b232, 8.

reception which makes the human being the image of God and the spiritual man, totally dependent on the invisible.<sup>621</sup>

Luther can speak of the reception of this image and the passivity associated with it in quite a mystical manner. Especially in the *Operationes in Psalmos* he does so with reference to the German mystic Johannes Tauler, such that passivity is understood not only as a turning away and being emptied of sensual attachments, but also as real suffering and passion associated with the mortification of the flesh. Luther connects this passion to the infusion of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. According to Luther, these virtues are purely divine and have God as their object, subject, operator, work, way and mode (*divinum obiectum, subiectum, operatorem, opus, artem, modum*). They are altogether internal with regard to the way they possess Christ as their object. They abstract the soul from all visible things and unite it with Christ, the pure internal Word of God. This abstraction leads to the suffering of the flesh, but at the same time it also leads to the rejoicing of the spirit.<sup>622</sup> Luther names the entire process “CROSS” and “passover” (*transitus, phase*), demonstrating how the mystical concept of *transitus* and the suffering associated with it forms a central point of his theology of the Cross.<sup>623</sup> What Luther speaks of is no anti-metaphysical theology focused on the external Cross and the humanity of Christ, but a theology which possesses Christ in the heart as the divine Bridegroom, in the midst of internal and external passion. Nevertheless, this process is not only passive, but also active. The new being constituted by faith increases as the Christian ‘transits’ by faith from this carnal life to participation in the objects of faith. This growing participation in Christ makes the believer more and more an image of God, being conformed to the image of Christ and transformed into that image, from clarity to clarity, as Luther is fond of saying with allusions to the text of 2 Corinthians 3 and 4. The foundation for this transformation is the real participation in Christ by the divine light of faith.

### 3.3.1.2 *The Cognition of God in Relation to the Intellect*

We have now come to see that for Luther faith is actual and direct cognition of God, whereby the believer participates in and is united with God with regard to his mind, both intellect and affect, through the divine light that is faith. But what kind of knowledge does this actual and direct cognition of God convey? Luther’s mystical allusions point in a certain direction. As we already have seen, for Luther God is with regard to his essence described in the terms on negative theology, as supereminent and incomprehensible.<sup>624</sup> This Luther’s understanding of the nature of God naturally has consequences for how the cognition of God is understood. In medieval theology it was commonly assumed that

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<sup>621</sup> See WA 57, a78, 12-16: “[12] Spiritualis homo est ipse absconditus nobis, novus et interior, imago et [13] gloria Dei et vir apud Apostolum vocatus. Hic est, qui soli proprie Deo [14] vacat potiusque passivus quam activus, cum nihil aliud faciat, quam [15] quod Deum in se recipiat; cuius vita est in fide, spe et charitate, totus sc. [16] pendens ex invisibilibus.”

The entire passage in its context can be found in footnote 323.

<sup>622</sup> On the motif of suffering see also Stoellger 2010, 215-222; 287-293.

<sup>623</sup> AWA 2, 107, 20 – 108, 5; 293, 7 – 296, 11; 299, 20 – 301, 10; 305, 14 – 306, 7; 317, 7 – 319, 3. See also chapter 2.4.2.1

<sup>624</sup> See chapter 2.2.

because the human intellect is created and finite it can never comprehend (*comprehendere*) God, i.e., to acquire a total and comprehensive concept of God. A comprehensive concept must be to be equal or superior to the object understood by it (in terms of metaphysical, causal hierarchy). The only ‘concept’ of God, however, is the divine essence itself, which exceeds the capacity of the finite created intellect. The question of how God can be the object of cognition, if the former is true, is discussed extensively by Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas among others. Thomas envisions that in this life God can be the object of cognition only through created similitudes. In the future life he will be known through the light of grace, which allows a partial knowledge of him.<sup>625</sup> Bonaventure, on the other hand, uses the concept of *cognitio per modum excessus* in his *Questiones disputatae de scientia Christi* to explain how the soul of Christ knew God. According to Bonaventure:

The soul of Christ does not comprehend an infinite number of things since it is a creature and is therefore limited; for it is neither equal to nor greater than the Word. And therefore, the soul does not grasp these things in their totality; rather, the soul is taken captive by them (*et ideo illa non omnimode capit, sed potius capitur*). And thus it is drawn not by comprehensive knowledge but rather by an ecstatic knowledge (*per modum excessus*). I call this an ecstatic mode of knowledge, not because the subject exceeds the object, but because the subject is drawn toward an object that exceeds it in a certain ecstatic mode that draws the soul beyond itself. [...] But this mode of knowing by means of ecstasy exists both in the wayfaring state and in heaven. For those in the wayfaring, it is only partial, while in heaven it is realized perfectly in Christ and in some of the saints.<sup>626</sup>

Although Bonaventure begins by focusing on the knowledge of the soul of Christ, we can see that he also applies the concept of *cognitio per modum excessus* (i.e., ecstatic knowledge) also to the Christian wayfarer. According to Bonaventure it is characteristic of ecstatic knowledge that the soul is taken captive by the object which it does not understand or comprehend. Rather, the object captures the soul into following it. This happens because the intellect and affect of the rational soul are directed to infinite good and infinite truth which is God, who is grasped in the ecstatic cognition even though he is not grasped comprehensively.<sup>627</sup> According to Bonaventure it would actually be impossible for God to be the object that captures the soul, if he could be grasped comprehensively, because only an object which exceeds the capacity of the soul can

<sup>625</sup> On the view of Thomas, see Sth I q 12 a 7-13.

<sup>626</sup> “Et ideo anima Christi, cum sit creatura ac per hoc finita, quantumcumque sit unita Verbo, infinita non comprehendit, quia nec illis aequatur nec illa excedit; et ideo illam non omnimode capit, sed potius capitur, ac per hoc in illa fertur per modum *comprehensionis*, sed potius per modum *excessus*. *Excessivum* autem modum cognoscendi dico, non quo cognoscens excedat cognitum, sed quo cognoscens fertur in obiectum excedens excessive quodam modo, erigendo se supra seipsum. [...] – Hic autem modum cognoscendi per excessum est in via et in patria; sed in via ex parte, in patria vero est perfecte in Christo et in aliis comprehensoribus” Bonaventure: *Questiones disputatae de scientia Christi*, VII, conclusio (p. 40). Translation by Hayes 2005, some changes made to punctuation.

<sup>627</sup> Bonaventure discusses the idea of *cognitio per modum excessus* in detail in *Questiones disputatae de scientia Christi*, I; V-VII. See also the introduction in Hayes 2005 (pages 45-67); S pinski 1948, 77-80; Scarpelli 2007, 80-81.

suffice for the soul.<sup>628</sup> Therefore, the ecstatic knowledge of God is at the same time both affective and intellectual, carrying both the intellect and the affect to its object. It is experiential knowledge, or experiential wisdom, which is the proper object of mystical theology. Furthermore, it is knowledge which is obtained partially in this life and completely in heaven.<sup>629</sup>

Let us now turn to Luther. First of all, although for Luther God is the object of direct and actual knowledge, Luther agrees with the idea that God, who is present for the mind in faith, at the same time transcends the capacity of the mind as its object. Luther writes in the *Dictata*:

**He ascends over the Cherubim.** God ‘ascends’ not in his nature but in our cognition and love, when he is known to be the most high, most incomprehensible and lovable over everything [*superamabilis*]. And the more we progress in knowing him, the more he ‘ascends’, because his highness is always known more and more clearly. [...] Therefore ‘Cherubim’ signify these cognitive powers, over all which God ‘ascends’ in the humble.

**Wings of winds** on the other hand properly signify the affective virtues. And so he ‘flies’. Therefore he is not said to ‘ascend’ over them but to ‘fly’, because he is loved only to that degree as to which he is known. He does not ‘fly’, i.e., is not loved higher than he ‘ascends’, i.e., is known. Therefore ‘flight’ means that he is the object of love, ‘ascent’ means that he is the object of knowing. But he does not ascend in his nature, but in our knowledge of him, does not fly in his nature, but in our affect and love of him. [...] And so, when [the Psalmist] said ‘flies’, he advisedly added ‘flies over wings’, so that you would understand that God does not fly or ascend absolutely, but that those who love him fly, and he nevertheless is always above them [and is more than can be comprehended].<sup>630</sup>

<sup>628</sup> “Postremo, licet intellectus et affectus animae rationalis nunquam quiescat nisi in Dei et in bono infinito, hoc non est, quia illud comprehendat, sed quia nihil sufficit animae, nisi eius capacitatem excedat. Unde verum est, quod ipsius animae rationalis et affectus et intellectus feruntur in infinitum bonum et ut infinitum” *Questiones disputatae de scientia Christi*, VI, conclusio (p. 35).

<sup>629</sup> “quia istum cognoscendi modum vix aut nunquam intelligit nisi expertus, nec expertus, nisi qui est in caritate radicans et fundatus, ut possit comprehendere cum omnibus Sanctis, quae sit longitudo, latitudo etc.; in quo etiam experimentalis et vera consistit sapientia, quae inchoatur in via et consummatur in patria” *Questiones disputatae de scientia Christi*, VII, epilogus (p. 43).

<sup>630</sup> WA 55, II, 137, 2 – 138, 4: “**Et Ascendit super Cherubin.** Deus ‘Ascendit’ [3] non in natura, Sed in nostra cognitione et amore, quando cognoscitur [4] esse altissimus et incomprehensibilis et superamabilis. Et sic quanto magis [5] proficimus in cognitione eius, tanto magis ‘ascendit’, quia semper clarius [6] ac clarius cognoscitur eius altitudo. Sed hoc ‘ascendere’ non contingit, [7] nisi vbi prius ‘descenderit’, Sicut Christus prius descendit et postea [8] ascendit. Quia ‘nemo ascendit in celum, nisi qui descendit’, i. e. nemo [9] peruenit ad diuinitatis cognitionem, nisi qui prius humiliatus fuerit [10] et in sui cognitionem descenderit, simul enim ibi et Dei cognitionem [11] inuenit. Vnde ‘Cherubim’ significat hic cognituias potentias, [12] super qua omnes ‘ascendit’ Deus in humilibus. **Penne** [13] **ventorum** autem significat proprie affectuias virtutes. Et sic ‘volat’. [14] Vnde super eas non dicitur ‘ascendere’, Sed ‘volare’, quia tantum manet [15] amabilis, quantum cognoscitur. Non enim altius ‘volat’, i. e. amatur, [16] quam ‘ascendit’, i. e. cognoscitur. Igitur ‘volatus’ eius est ipsum esse [17] obiectum Dilectionis, ‘Ascensus’ autem eius est ipsum esse obiectum [18] cognitionis. Ascendit non natura, Sed cognitione sui nostra, volat non [19] natura, Sed affectu et amore sui nostro. [‘Volat’, i. e. in volatu sanctorum [20] est et amatur. ‘Ascendit’, i. e. in proficiscenti cognitione ipse est [21] vel ... Volatus enim significat raptus, Iubilos et affectus diligentium et [1] deuotorum spirituum. Vel est o ...] Et notanter cum dixisset ‘Volauit’, [2] addit ‘volauit super pennas’, vt intelligas, quia non absolute [3] in se volat, nec ascendit, Sed quia amantes eum volant, et super eos [4] tamen adhuc est semper [et plus quam comprehendere possint].”

This passage on the incomprehensibility of God belongs to a wider context in which Luther discusses the nature of faith also with reference to the image of the cloud.<sup>631</sup> Luther sums up the entire passage: “In everything it is required that our intellect is humiliated and a cloud is formed in it, so that it is taken captive to follow Christ”.<sup>632</sup> We see here how the incomprehensibility is connected to the concept of being captivated to follow something that is not understood. A second, similar, text also connects the incomprehensibility of the divine nature to the cognition of God:

**And he heard me from his holy temple** from the highest divinity or the dwelling place of angels [...] **and fire** i.e., zeal and anger **from his face** cognition the present God **flared** against sin: **coals were set burning by him** i.e., dead, black and frigid sinners, before they are set on fire by charity and made alive. **He bent** set down or humiliated **the skies** apostles and disciples **and descended** by effect, ‘giving to humble his grace’ and knowledge: **and cloud blindness was under his feet** in impious Jews and other unbelievers ‘who mind earthly things’ and [they who are not his seat, as the skies] are set as a footstool of his feet. **And then he ascended** is recognized to be superior **over the Cherubim** over all intellect and fullness of knowledge **and flew** i.e., is made more and more high: **he flew over wings** all virtues **of winds** spirits, heavenly and human. **And he made darkness his hiding place** i.e., he is made incomprehensible [so that he cannot be reached, ‘dwelling in inaccessible light’], or is hidden in faith and is seen through the darkness of the intellect [through negations]<sup>633</sup>

Gloss 15) ‘Ascends’, ‘flies’, ‘to descend’, ‘to ascend’, ‘to fly’ are all said of God not regarding the form/substance, but of the effect (*non formaliter, sed effectiue*). Through these namely the incomprehensibility of the divinity is expressed, which the ecstatic and contemplative see, as the Apostle says Rom. 11: ‘O highness’ etc. Because as flying we cannot be caught by pursuit, so God is above and become incomprehensible to everyone who contemplates and looks up the sky of the divinity.<sup>634</sup>

<sup>631</sup> WA 55, II, 135, 5 – 140, 19.

<sup>632</sup> WA 55, II, 140, 14-16: “In omnibus enim requiretur, vt inclinetur intellectus noster, et fiat ‘caligo’ in eo, i.e. captiuetur in obsequium Christo.”

<sup>633</sup> WA 55, I, 134, 9 – 138, 8: “[9] **Et exaudiuit de templo sancto suo**<sup>8</sup> de summa diuinitate vel de [10] angelorum habitaculo [...] / **et ignis** i. e. zelus et [8] indignatio **a facie eius** cognitione Dei presentis<sup>12</sup> **exarsit** contra peccatum: [9] **carbones succensi sunt ab eo** i. e. mortui, nigri et frigidi peccatores prius [10] iam inflammati sunt charitate et viuificati. [17, 10] **Inclinauit** demisit vel [11] humiliavit **cœlos** apostolos et discipulos<sup>13</sup> **et descendit** per effectum, ‘dando [12] humilibus gratiam’ et cognitionem sui: **et caligo** cecitas **sub pedibus eius** [13] in Impiis Iudeis et aliis incredulis, ‘qui terrena sapiunt’ et [non sunt sedes [1] eius vt celi] positi sunt Scabellum pedum eius<sup>14</sup>. [17, 11] **Et tunc ascendit** [2] agnitus est esse superior **super Cherubin** super omnem intelligentiam et [3] scientie plenitudinem **et volauit**<sup>15</sup> i. e. magis ac magis sublimis [factus] [4] est: **volauit super pennas** omnes virtutes **ventorum** spirituum tam celestium [5] quam humanorum. [17, 12] **Et posuit tenebras latibulum suum** i. e. [6] factus est incomprehensibilis [ita quod attingi non potest, ‘habitans [7] lucem inaccessibilem’], vel in fide latet et videtur per tenebras intellectus [8] [per negationes].”

<sup>634</sup> WA 55, I, 138 gloss 15, 12-17: “GLOSSA.<sup>15</sup> [12] ‘Ascendit’, ‘volat’, ‘Descendere’, ‘Ascendere’, ‘volare’ omnia de [13] Deo dicuntur non formaliter, Sed effectiue. Exprimuntur enim in hiis [14] incomprehensibilitas diuinitatis, quam vident exstatici et contemplatiui, [15] vt apostolus Ro. XI.: ‘o altitudo’ etc. Quia sicut Volantes nos nequimus [16] consequi, apprehendere, Sic Deus supereminet et incomprehensibilis fit [17] omni contemplanti et sursum spectanti in celum diuinitatis.”

Here we see the familiar definition of “face” as meaning the cognition of God who is present. In this cognition (i.e., faith) God first descends to the soul in grace, humiliating the flesh. God then ascends in effect, when he is recognized as transcending all the cognitive capacities of the soul. Thus he is present and seen in faith, but the light of his presence is also darkness due to the virtue of its highness, the divine incomprehensibility. Luther uses the images of the enigmatic or shining cloud to illustrate the dual nature of this knowledge: something is known, but the totality is not understood. Believers and the spirit do not know God clearly (*clare*), but partially (*ex parte*). Some light is perceived, some remains in darkness and enigma.<sup>635</sup> The same idea of Christ being present in the soul “over faith” (*super fidem*) occurs a number of times in the *Dictata* as well as in *the Lectures on Hebrews*.<sup>636</sup> In all these places the incomprehensibility of God is connected to the nature of the divinity and the presence of Christ in the soul, as well as to the figure of the Cherubim. These images point to a Franciscan influence, which is further corroborated by the fact that Luther speaks at multiple places, also in other works than *Dictata*, about faith as “the shadow of the wings of Christ” (*pennae* or *alarum*). Francis saw Christ in the form of the winged Seraph, and in the mystical tradition the wings of the Cherubim and Seraphim signify the meditation and contemplation of God in Christ, as can be seen in Richard of St. Victor’s and Bonaventure’s use of the image.<sup>637</sup> For Luther, the wings of the Cherubim mean both natures of Christ and their incomprehensible unity in him. Luther also links these images to contemplation and meditation, and to the writings of the contemplative souls (written by quill pens). However, they are especially connected to the knowledge of God in faith. Luther states that the shadow of the wings means the impression of Christ in the soul, which is faith.<sup>638</sup> The image is the reverse of that of the

<sup>635</sup> WA 55, I, 650 gloss 1: “GLOSSA:<sup>1)</sup> [1]Nota: fides Est ‘Nubes’ iis, qui credunt, seu spiritui, Sed ‘Caligo’ iis, [2]qui non credunt, seu carni. Quia Increduli et caro nullo modo percipiunt [3]ea, que sunt Dei, Sed est illis stultitia omnis sapientia. Sed Creduli et [4]spiritus, licet non clare percipiant, tamen ‘ex parte cognoscunt’ ac velut [5]in ‘nube lucida’. Eodem modo Et ipsa Ecclesia Est Nubes et Caligo et [6]quilibet fidelis. Eodem modo Et ipsa Ecclesia Est Nubes et Caligo et [6]quilibet fidelis. Vnde et psal. 18.: ‘Dies diei eructat verbum, et nox nocti [7]indicat scientiam’, cum sit idem vtrunque.”

WA 55, II, 754, 14-19: “**Nubes et caligo** sit in **circuitu** Christi, Et ipse in [15] medio nubis, que est in anima, Et caliginis, que est in carne. Nam Nouus [16] homo per fidem accepit nubem, i. e. enygmaticam lucem, Et per hoc vetus [17] homo accepit caliginem et obscuratus est salubriter. Quia dum spiritus [18] illustratur, caro excecatur; hoc per Iudicium et illud per Iustitiam. Et sic [19] est sedes Christi correcta.”

<sup>636</sup> WA 55, I, 138 gloss 14; WA 55, II, 590, 21 – 591, 42; 763, 16-18; WA 57, b201, 10-17.

<sup>637</sup> McGinn 1998, 83-85; 94-96; 108-109; *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, especially VII, 3. On the allegory of the Cherubim see also pp. 69-70.

<sup>638</sup> WA 55, II, 126, 6-12: “[6] **Vmbra alarum Dei** Mystice Est fides Christi, que est in enygmata [7] et vmbra in hac vita. ‘Ale’ autem Christi sunt manus eius extense in [8] cruce. Quia sicut corpus [Christi in cruce] efficit vmbra, Sic facit [9] spiritualem vmbra in anima, scil. fidem crucis sue, Sub qua protegitur [10] omnis sanctus. Secundo ‘Vmbra alarum’ Est protectio et custodia [11] 3, 112 sanctorum, angelorum vel | hominum contemplatiuorum, qui sunt ale [12] Dei, quia in ipsis volat et habitat affectuosis raptibus mentibus.”

WA 55, II, 804, 144 – 805, 159: “[144] **Qui ponis nubem ascensum tuum, Qui ambulas super pennas [145] ventorum.**[[Lit[er]aliter:]] Ad literam de Christo factum est, vt patet [146] Act. 1. Secundo Quia aquas tectrices dixerat, Ex quo sequitur, Quod in [147] tegumento et velamento istarum aquarum simus, Ac sic sine dubio in [148] Nube et fidei vmbraculo. In hac autem ascendit Christus et nos ascendere [149] facit. [[Trop[ologice:]] Hec enim est Scala Iacob, Sed non nisi in somno et [150] visione perceptibilis. Quis enim sciat fidem esse Schalam et nubem ascensus, [151] nisi qui mundo dormit et visione spirituali vigilat? Igitur Tegi aquis [152] (i. e. captuari intellectum verbis Euangelii) hocipsum est nubem accipere [153] in intellectu. Et hec nubes ponitur fixe pro fundamento. [[Alleg[orice:]] [154] Tercio ex hoc iam et ex illa nube et tegumento quilibet est Nubes, qui [155] Christum predicat et portat ad alios. Sic enim ascendit super

light reflected on the soul, but contains the same idea: the image of Christ is formed in the soul, but now by means of a shadow. In some texts this image is related to God's protection of the believer and the hiddenness of faith and divinity under the humanity of Christ. As we can see in the texts quoted, it is also related to the supereminence of the divine nature, which though is known actually and directly in faith, nevertheless remains incomprehensible, always "flying" and above the believer. Moreover, the image of the wings is even linked to another mystical term: elevation or rapture (*raptus*). Luther states that faith is elevation, in which the most high light of faith is effused upon us and we are simultaneously elevated by that light to God:

God indeed elevates his light over us, when he elevates us by that light. For faith is a light above all our grasp. Therefore this 'elevation' is nothing else than to shed over us the light of faith which in itself is most high, by which we are elevated. Therefore it may be called *sealed*, because it is closed and incomprehensible to us, but comprehends us and captivates us into following it.<sup>639</sup>

In multiple places in his works, Luther does indeed connect faith to the concepts of elevation, ecstasis or rapture. In the *Dictata*, the three terms seem to bear the same meaning, whereas in the later works ecstasis (*excessus*) is connected especially with humiliation and suffering experienced during or preceding the infusion of faith. The term rapture (*raptus*) is consequently connected to the deliverance from this suffering and the experience of the goodness of God.<sup>640</sup> When one is elevated by the light of faith to the

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nubem leuem [156] et ingreditur in Egyptum, Isaie 19. Nam Quis videt Christum in suis [157] predicatoribus et fidelibus? Nullus, Sed creditur in illis esse et ex luce verborum [158] et operum, que per illos velut ex nube mittit, intelligitur. Igitur In [159] Nube est, i. e. in obscura cognitione sui, qua in aliis esse cognoscitur."

WA 55, II, 805, 174-182: "Penne ventorum, i. e. [174] spirituum, sunt affectiones et meditationes spiritualium vel animarum, [175] Quibus ipse nos volare facit, Sed super nos volitans sicut 'Aquila prouocans [176] pullos suos'. Quis enim tantum vt ille volare presumat? Semper [177] itaque super pennas nostras ambulat, semper superior est, Et tamen non [178] remotus, quin vestigia eius in pennis nostris sint. Si enim Vestigia eius [179] non in nobis sint, i. e. quod in veritate et Iustitia volemus, Vtique non volabimus, [180] Sed reptabimus in terra. Quare 'Volare' Est celestia meditari et [181] amare, Sed ipsum 'ambulare' in istis meditationibus et amoribus Est in [182] veritate et humilitate ista meditari et amare"

See also WA 55, I, 138, 1-5; 314, 11-12; 682, 28 – 684, 1; WA 55, II, 368, 347-353; 704, 174-187; WA 56, 298, 29 – 299, 6; WA 57, b164, 14 – b165, 10; b201, 10-17; WA 5, 503, 35 – 506, 5; 633, 15-22. In *Operationes* Luther interprets the wings of the Cherubim as the two testaments, which Christ conciles, and over which he descends to the soul.

<sup>639</sup> AWA 2, 202, 22 – 203, 2. "Levat vero lumen super nos, dum nos lumine eo levat. Est enim fides lux supra omnem captum nostrum. Quare hoc 'levare' est aliud nihil quam lumen fidei, quod seipso altissimum est, super nos effundere, quo ipsi elevemur. Unde et signatum dici potest, quia clausum et incomprehensibile nobis comprehendens autem nos et in obsequium sui captivans."

<sup>640</sup> WA 55, I, 756 gloss 3: "GLOSSA:<sup>3)</sup> [5]'Extasis' illa [1]

{Primo Est sensus fidei, qui excedit sensum literę,/ [2]in quo alii remanent increduli./

[3]Secundo Est 'raptus mentis' in claram cognitionem/ [4]fidei, et ista est proprie Exstasis./

[6]Tertio Est Alienatio seu 'pauor' mentis in persecutione./

[7]Quarto Est Excessus iste quem faciunt martyres,/ [8]sicut Luce 9. de 'Excessu' Christi Moses et Helias/

[9]loquebantur."

WA 55, II, 885, 161-167: "Si enim Credidit, coram Deo exaltatus est; fides enim eleuat. [162] Quomodo ergo humiliatus est? Nisi Quia simul apud veracem Deum est in [163] excessu [altus], vbi Deum laudat, Et apud mendaces homines est humiliatus, [164] quos et miseratur. Ideo Vbi est exaltatus, in excessu agit, quod

cognition of God, God as the object of cognition remains above comprehension, but himself comprehends and captivates the believer into following him. The same idea of being taken captive by faith occurs in a number of Luther's texts concerning faith.<sup>641</sup> Thus Luther seems to understand the cognition of God, which takes place in the rapture of faith,

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dicat: [165] 'Quid retribuam Domino?' Et dicit de suis persecutoribus: 'Omnis homo [166] mendax'. Vbi autem est humiliatus, dicit: 'Calicem salutaris accipiam', et [167] 'Vota mea'."

WA 55, II, 888, 252-261: "[252] 115, 11 **Ego dixi in excessu meo: omnis homo mendax.** Iste est excessus, [253] quo per fidem leuatur super se, vt videat futura bona. Alioquin et ipse [254] erat homo mendax, Sed in excessu factus mendacium excessit et verax factus [255] est per fidem. Et ideo eos, qui vanitatem diligere conspexit et fidem [256] posthabere, mendaces esse vidit, Quia reputant ea bona sua, que non [257] sunt. Et cum humiliati sint nimis, exaltati sibi videntur. Et ideo mirum [258] est, quomodo simul dicat humiliatum se et in excessu esse, Scil. quia agnoscit [259] se humiliatum et miserum per excessum. Illi autem non sunt humiliati [260] (i. e. non agnoscunt), quia nondum sunt in excessu, Sed in volucro [261] mendacii."

See also WA 55, II, 137, 19 – 138, 1; 174, 1-7; 343, 2 – 344, 21; 880, 19-25; WA 56, 299, 27 – 300, 8; WA 57, b143, 7 – b144, 12; AWA 2, 139, 6 – 141, 19; 178, 19 – 179, 6; 305, 16 – 306, 7; 317, 7 – 321, 5; WA 5, 444, 32 – 445, 1. In addition, see Oberman 1967, 45-59. In some places Luther connects these concepts directly to mystical themes with reference to Pseudo-Dionysius among others, but at other places they are more explicitly connected to faith.

<sup>641</sup> WA 55, II, 714, 471-475: "Veritas autem incomprehensibilis erat, Quia non comprehendit, [472] Sed comprehendere debet, Nec protegi scuto aut circumdari, Sed [473] esse scutum et circumdare. Et ita, quia captiuat intellectum, qui appetit videre [474] volantia in die dogmata, ideo non est in die, non est in manifesto, [475] Sed abscondit ipsa nos in sese."

WA 56, 96 gloss 2: "GLOSSA:<sup>2</sup> [20]Et notandum, quod de Verbo Dei loquitur, Quod ipsum sit 'abbreviatum', [21]cum potius Iudei sint ab eo abbreviati, quia non apprehenderunt [22]illud. | Sed | Quia et verum est, Quod verbum fidei magis capit, [23]quam capiatur, Quia captiuat sensum humanum. Vnde Christus Iohann. 8.: [24]'Sermo meus non capit in vobis.' Qui ergo sunt increduli, non capiuntur [25]et in illis verbum abbreviatur. Sed in credulis consummatur, Quia [26]perficitur, dum capit credentes in se."

AWA 2, 317, 14 – 319, 3: "At fidei, spei, caritatis opus et esse videntur idem esse. Quid enim est fides, nisi motus ille cordis, qui credere, spes motus, qui sperare, caritas motus, qui diligere vocatur? Nam phantasmata illa puto humana esse, quod aliud sit habitus et aliud actus eius, praesertim in his divinis virtutibus, in quibus non est nisi passio, raptus, motus, quo movetur, formatur, purgatur, impraegnatur anima verbo dei, ut sit omnino negotium harum virtutum aliud nihil quam purgatio palmitis, ut Christus dicit <Ioh 15,2>, quo fructum purgatus plus afferat. Denique ceterae virtutes versantur circa res crassas et corporales externe, illae vero circa purum verbum dei interne, quo capitur et non capit anima, hoc est, exuitur tunica et calciamentis suis, ab omnibus tam rebus quam phantasmatibus [V 4] rapiunturque per verbum (cui adhaeret, immo quod eam apprehendit et ducit mirabiliter) 'in solitudinem' (ut Osee 2<,14> dicit), in invisibilia, in cubiculum suum, 'in cellam vinariam' <Cant 2,4>. At hic ductus, hic raptus, hic expolitio misere eam discruciat. Arduum est enim et angusta via relinquere omnia visibilia, exui omnibus sensibus, educi ex consuetis, denique hoc mori est et ad inferos descendere. Videtur enim ipsa sibi funditus perire, dum subtractis omnibus, in quibus stetit, versabatur, haerebat, nec terram tangit nec caelum, nec se sentit nec deum dicens <Cant 5,8>: Nuntiate dilecto meo, 'quia amore langueo', quasi dicat: Redacta sum in nihilum et nescivi, in tenebras et caliginem ingressa nihil video; fide, spe et caritate sola vivo et infirmor (id est, patior), 'cum enim infirmor, tunc fortior sum' <2Cor 12,10b>. Hunc ductum theologi mystici vocant 'in tenebras ire', 'ascendere super ens et non ens'. Verum nescio, an seipsos intelligant, si id actibus elicitis tribuunt et non potius crucis, mortis infernique passiones significari credunt. CRUX sola est nostra theologia."

WA 5, 418, 9-15: "[9] 'Et viam pacis non cognoverunt'. Quare? Quia rem sequuntur et [10] sicut equus et mulus non habent intellectum, qui est fides rerum invisibilium. [11] Sensuales enim homines pacem in rebus huius mundi quaerunt, hypocritae [12] autem in suis consiliis, studiis et operibus, utrique in his, quae sentiunt et [13] capiunt. At pax vera est in fide verbi et his rebus, quae nec sentiuntur [14] [Joh. 8, 37.] nec capiuntur, sed capiunt credentem sibi, sicut Christus dixit iudaeis 'Sermo [15] meus non capit in vobis'. Pisces enim non capiunt, sed capiuntur rheti."

See also WA 55, I, 216, 1-3; gloss 5; WA 55, II, 653, 252-259; 734, 119-122; WA 57, a57, 6-16; AWA 2, 107, 20 – 108, 5; 141, 11-19; 202, 22 – 203, 2; WA 5, 506, 12-15; 536, 26-37.

That Luther's notion of faith includes the concept of *captivatio in obsequium Christi* is noted also by Lohse 1958, 105-106, who relates the concept to the hearing of the external word.



in a manner very close to that of Bonaventure's *cognitio per modum excessus*. One can therefore summarize that Luther's understanding of the nature of the immediate knowledge of God that is faith follows the central features of Bonaventure's idea: God is known in faith as the direct object of experience, who nevertheless in his essence remains above the comprehensive faculties of the soul. The knowledge of God received in faith is only partial, which Luther describes by means of a number of images. Furthermore, the cognition of God is fascinating and miraculous to such a degree that it comprehends and captivates the believer to follow the guidance of the divine light. This happens especially through the participation of the mind in the spiritual good that is God. It is to this subject we turn next.

### 3.3.1.3 The Cognition of God in Relation to the Affect

As we have seen above, Luther's definition of *facies* as the actual and direct knowledge of God in faith is related both to the intellect and the affect. Referring to "devout doctors" and Jean Gerson, Luther says it is "both intellective and affective knowledge" (*notitia ... intellectiua quam affectiua*).<sup>642</sup> God not only is the proper object of the intellect and even the source of the theological intellect itself. He is also the proper object of the affect as the highest good, and even the source of theological affect itself when it is united to that highest good and elevated above all creation.<sup>643</sup> The concept of faith as the light of the face of God and the concept of God as the highest, self-diffusing good are therefore intimately connected. As we saw in the previous chapter, for Luther the "light of the face of God" in the Ps. 4:7 is the answer to the question "Who will show us good?". True good is not known by human reason, but is shown in the divine light of faith. That same light, which is *signatum* for the intellect is *laetitia* (joy, delight) for the will. As divine light, it shows God, the highest good and all good (*omne bonum*).<sup>644</sup> However, the exact nature of this spiritual good is difficult to ascertain. On the one hand Luther speaks about the "grace

<sup>642</sup> WA 55, I, 242 gloss 11; WA 55, II, 152, 23 – 153, 13.

<sup>643</sup> See AWA 2, 40, 3 – 41, 10; 43, 21 – 44, 20; WA 55, II, 81, 4-6.

<sup>644</sup> WA 55, II, 80, 28 – 82, 2: "Nos autem non sic, Domine, Sed confitemur tibi, quia indigemus [29] ostensore bonorum et ex nobis non videmus ista bona. Sed lumen [30] vultus tui (i. e. fides, per quam cognoscimus faciem tuam et gloriam [31] tuam) signatum est (i. e. signum factum, nondum autem res, quia [32] 'fides est argumentum rerum', non autem ipse res) super nos (i. e.) [1] desursum: quia 'omne donum desursum est', et fides est super omnem [2] sensum sursum; hoc est enim 'lumen', in quo 'ostenduntur nobis bona'). [3] Sic enim ostendis faciem tuam et ostendis nobis omne bonum. Ex qua [4] ostensione in memoria et intellectu facta non potest voluntas continere, [5] quin gaudeat, Quia omne bonum letificat appetitum, cum sit eius [6] 4, 7b proprium obiectum. Ideo sequitur: **Dedisti letitiam in corde meo.** [7] letatus sum, inquit, in hiis, que dicta sunt mihi, dicta scil. per [8] ostensionem huius luminis. Sic Zacharias audiuit verba bona et consolatoria, [9] quia 'ostendit' Dominus populo suo 'bonum'. Sic itaque fides [10] semper habet comitem letitiam in spiritu sancto. Vnde hic dicit: 'in [11] corde meo', i. e. spiritu, non in carne mea, que est impiorum, qui diligunt [12] vanitatem. Sic iam sunt omnia salua in spiritu, Memoria, intellectus: [13] quia 'lumen' quoad intellectum 'Signatum', i. e. firmiter impressum [14] signum, 'letitia' quoad Voluntatem. Non solum autem in se, Sed quia [15] bonum est diffusivum sui. Si 'Multi' sunt, qui 'dicunt: quis ostendit [1] nobis bona?' cur non etiam multi sint, super quos 'signatum est hoc [2] 3, 58 lumen' boni ostensium, quibus 'brachium Domini | reuelatum est'?"

See also AWA 2, 205, 1 – 207, 13. The interpretation of Ps 4:7 holds an extremely important place in the tradition of divine illumination. Luther's interpretation of this verse is examined more precisely in chapter 3.2.3.

of heavenly goods” (*celestium bonorum gratia*), the “eternal spiritual goods of faith” (*eterna bona spiritualia fidei*), simply “spiritual goods” (*spiritualia bona*), or he contrasts the invisible goods of faith to the visible goods of the wicked.<sup>645</sup> On the other hand, however, Luther defines the object of faith (with regard to the good) as “the Lord himself i.e., Spiritual things” (*ipse Dominusmet, i.e. Spiritualia*), as adhesion to God i.e., the better goods in faith, or as the vision of the face of God; stating that all good things are comprehended in the light of the face of God. In any case, the attainment of this spiritual good requires turning away from the created goods.<sup>646</sup> But are the spiritual goods something existing between God and the soul, or are they identical to God?<sup>647</sup> Perhaps in the background lies a distinction similar to the relationship between God and the ideas in Neoplatonic thought: in God all the ideas are in unity, in the creation they are distinct. In this case, then, the light would function both as the ontological source of all good (i.e., the light itself is the highest spiritual good, God), as well as comprehend in itself specific moral criteria<sup>648</sup>: both in an indistinct sense as the totality of good, and in a distinct sense as the collection of all specific intellectual goods.<sup>649</sup> The spiritual goods may also include effects of faith such as justification, forgiveness of sins, peace of conscience, and freedom from the fear of damnation, all of which flow from the cognition of God in faith.<sup>650</sup>

Regardless of what can be said concerning the status of the *spiritualia* between God and the soul, Luther considers at least God himself the direct object of the cognition of the divine light. For Luther, God in himself is the highest good and therefore the immediate knowledge of God in faith leads to the highest blessedness (*gaudium*), joy (*laetitia*) and delight (*delectatio*).<sup>651</sup> Luther especially connects the concept of *laetitia* to the good shown by the divine light. Joy of the heart and a most sweet affect towards God and all the creatures infallibly results from knowledge of God in the light of faith. Faith ‘enlarges’ the heart and makes the believer ready to suffer and work willingly before God and all

<sup>645</sup> WA 55, I, 176, 3-4; WA 55, II, 152, 13-22; 783, 141-142; AWA 2, 207, 3-13.

<sup>646</sup> WA 55, II, 119, 20-23: “**Dominus pars hereditatis mee** [21] i. e. Spes et merces mea et passionis mee; non est quid carnale et temporale, [22] Sed ipse Dominusmet, i. e. Spiritualia [quia Dominus non habetur [23] nisi in et cum spiritualibus bonis].”

WA 55, II, 225, 28-32: “Sed quare dicit **vultus mei**? Quia tota merces Est [29] visio, Et quoniam Deus non est ‘salutaris’ nisi iis, qui faciem ad eum vertunt [30] et dorsum ad temporalia. Qui autem in temporalibus querunt salutem, [31] volunt Deum sibi facere salutare dorsi sui, Quia faciem ad temporalia [32] et dorsum ad Deum vertunt, cum ‘duobus dominis seruire non possit’.”

WA 55, II, 783, 134 – 784, 145: “[134] 101, 3 **Non Auertas faciem tuam a me**. Sepe dictum est, Quid facies [135] Domini significet, Scil. ipsum spiritum distinctum contra literam, que est [136] dorsum, vt Psal. 79.: ‘Ostende faciem tuam et salui erimus’. Psal. 4.: ‘Signatum [137] est super nos lumen vultus tui, Domine.’ Et 88.: ‘In lumine vultus tui [138] ambulabunt.’ In ista autem luce et facie omnia bona comprehenduntur, [139] Quia Est nihil aliud nisi Scire Ihesum Christum. Et hunc scire est omnia [140] scire et habere. Facies enim Notitia est Domini, Quę nunc per fidem in [141] nobis est, tunc autem per speciem. Sensus ergo est: Ne auertas a me spiritum [142] et fidem et spiritualia bona, sicut in illis facis, qui diligunt vanitatem [143] et querunt mendacium. Auerte ergo a me, si libet, diuitias, gloriam, sanitatem [144] et quicquid potest caro habere in hac vita; tantummodo faciem tuam [145] ne auertas.”

See also WA 55, II, 284, 111-120; WA 56, 75, 13-15; 461, 4-5; WA 57, b118, 13-16; b228, 17 – b229, 4.

<sup>647</sup> The same question is made also in chapter 2.2.2.

<sup>648</sup> See WA 56, 345, 23-25; AWA 2, 203, 3 – 204, 5.

<sup>649</sup> See WA 55, II, 329, 19 – 330, 33 and WA 55, II, 427, 53-58. On the relationship between the forms and God in Augustinian Platonism, see Nash 2003, 22-23.

<sup>650</sup> See AWA 2, 205, 1 – 207, 13.

<sup>651</sup> WA 55, II, 45, 12 – 46, 2; 323, 379 – 325, 427. On God as the highest good on Luther see chapter 2.2.2.

people.<sup>652</sup> It is the foundation, origin, fountain and principle from which all good works, virtues, gifts and graces flow.<sup>653</sup> Luther also speaks about the nature of faith with regard to God in terms of “tasting” the sweetness of God, with reference to St. Bernard.<sup>654</sup> The nature of this good is defined experientially, as it is something which “excels all senses” (*exuperat omnem sensum*) and is known and understood only by one who has been united with God in faith.<sup>655</sup> However, the limitation of *cognitio per modum excessus* discussed above also applies to this experiential knowledge of the goodness of God: God is known only partially, not fully.<sup>656</sup> The joy and blessedness acquired are only incipient and partial, not yet the heavenly perfection. Luther can therefore speak about the joy given in the light of faith as “enigmatic joy” or “joy of obscurity” (*laetitia enigmatis*), because compared to the heavenly vision, God is known by the light of faith only partially, in a shadowy and enigmatic way: as in a (dim) mirror.<sup>657</sup>

<sup>652</sup> WA 5, 460, 37 – 461, 5: “[37] Hoc est, quod dixi: Ad fiduciam istam cordis bonam de deo infallibiliter [38] sequi laetitiam cordis et dulcissimum affectum erga deum et omnem creaturam. [39] Sic enim credenti spiritus sanctus diffunditur in cor, quo rursum [40] cor hominis diffunditur et dilatatur in omnem promptitudinem omnia gratuito [41] faciendi et patiendi tam coram deo quam hominibus. Ibi inimicos non [1] minus quam amicos diligit efficiturque libens omnium servus, ut omnibus [2] queat prodesse, sui ipsius non modo incuriosus, sed etiam prodigus factus. [3] [Ps. 4, 7.] Sic ps. 4. cum dixisset ‘Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, domine’, [4] [Ps. 4, 8.] mox secutus dicit ‘Dedisti laetitiam in corde meo’, itidem duo ista connectens, [5] fidem et laetitiam cordis, sicut et hoc loco facit.”

<sup>653</sup> WA 55, II, 639, 269 – 640, 285.

<sup>654</sup> WA 55, I, 300, 22-23: “**Teth. Gustate** Quia affectus plus erudit quam intellectus **\*et tunc videte** intelligite **quoniam suavis** ‘Bonus’ **est dominus**”<sup>10b</sup>.

WA 55, I, 301 gloss 10: “GLOSSA:<sup>10</sup> Vnde ex isto versu discimus, Quod, licet potentiam et sapientiam Dei possimus videre sine gustu bonitatis, tamen bonitatem eius recte videre et credere nullus potest, nisi qui prius eam aliquo modo expertus sit et gustauerit. Si quis animam Bernhardi haberet, hic verum istum bene caperet.”

<sup>655</sup> WA 57, b188, 7-15: “Similiter et ‘pax’ [8] non ea intelligitur, quae dici, scribi cogitarique ab homine potest nec [9] ab ulla creatura dari, sed est ea, ‘quae exuperat omnem sensum’ id est [10] mentem et abscondita est sub cruce et morte non aliter quam sol sub [11] nube. Unde de impiis dicitur psalm. 13.: ‘Viam pacis non cognoverunt.’ [12] Hanc autem impossibile est sine fide id est iustitia Dei haberi, psal. 84.: [13] ‘Iustitia et pax osculae sunt.’ Quia cum per multas tribulationes Deus [14] auferat omnia bona nostra et vitam, impossibile est, ut animus sit quietus [15] et hoc sustineat, nisi melioribus bonis adhaeserit, i. e. Deo per fidem [16] coniunctus fuerit.”

<sup>656</sup> WA 55, II, 119, 20 – 120, 5: “**Dominus pars hereditatis mee** [21] i. e. Spes et merces mea et passionis mee; non est quid carnale et temporale, [22] Sed ipse Dominusmet, i. e. Spiritualia [quia Dominus non habetur [23] nisi in et cum spiritualibus bonis]. [24] Et Nota: Deus in hac vita est ‘pars’ sanctorum seu merces partialis. [25] Vt Apostolus 1. Corinth. 13. ‘Ex parte cognoscimus’ etc. Sed in futuro [26] erit ‘Deus omnia in omnibus’, vt eiusdem 15., cum ‘euacuatum’ fuerit, [1] quod ex parte nunc est. Ideo vocat hic Christus Dominum ‘partem [2] 3, 106 sortis sue’ et | **calicis** sui. Quid autem sit ‘calix’, vide supra. [[Vel sic: [3] ‘Dominus pars hereditatis mee’, i. e. merui, vt Dominus sit merces [4] meorum et pars in hac vita, itaque omnia ex me sunt spiritualia eorum [5] bona.]] “

<sup>657</sup> WA 5, 464, 26 – 465, 16: “[36] ‘Laetitia interna’, quam Hieronymus ‘plenitudinem laetitiarum ante [37] vultum dei’ non male intelligit, Ea est, qua videtur deus deorum in Zion [38] sicuti est et facie ad faciem, ubi est satiety plena cordis nostri, ut digna [39] Emphasi ‘plenitudo laetitiarum’ appelletur. In hac enim vita ex parte cognoscimus, [1] ex parte prophetamus, ita ex parte laetamur et omnia ex parte [2] habemus. ‘Cum autem venerit quod perfectum est, evacuabitur quod ex [3] [1. Cor. 13, 10.] parte est’, 1. Cor. 13., ubi non miscebitur risus dolori nec luctus consolationi, [4] sicut necesse est in hac vita fieri, dum peregrinamur a domino et per speculum [5] videmus in enigmate. Quare laetitiam huius vitae laetitiam enigmatis, [6] illius vero laetitiam vultus seu faciei domini appellare possumus. Sic enim [7] hebraice sine praepositione ‘cum’ et ‘ante’ dicitur ‘plenitudinem laetitiarum [8] faciei tuae’, ut plenitudinem laetitiarum e facie et revelata gloria dei pendere [9] [Ps. 17, 15.] intelligamus, sicut psalmo sequente dicit ‘Satiabor, cum apparuerit [10] [Joh. 14, 21.] gloria tua’. Et Christus Ioh. 14. ‘Qui diligit me diligetur a patre meo, et [11] ego diligam eum et manifestabo ei meipsum’. Haec est laetitia aeterna, quia [12] plenitudo laetitiarum, cum

Thus for Luther faith is immediate and direct, actual and experiential knowledge of God. God is known “face to face” in faith, with the highest part of the mind being receptive and united with the divine light. Through faith the believer is united with the divine nature and becomes one with God. This ontological union is the foundation of the epistemological knowledge of God in faith. In his concept of faith Luther agrees with the doctrine of divine illumination and seems to reject the *via moderna*’s exclusion of the possibility of attaining the direct and immediate vision of God while one is in the state of a wayfarer. Nevertheless, even though Luther describes the cognition of God in faith as immediate, it is still only partial and in some sense hidden and shadowy. In general, Luther’s concept of faith as illumination seems to be constructed upon the theology of Augustine, Bonaventure and Gerson, although it also incorporates other mystical themes.

One can distinguish three different approaches in Luther’s definition of faith. These can be termed Augustinian (emphasis on divine light), Aristotelian (emphasis on the concept of form and passive receptivity) and Mystical (emphasis on faith as shadow or enigma; ecstasis and the image of the Cherubim). As we have seen, however, Luther fuses different images together in specific texts. Thus this categorization should be used as an aid in distinguishing different strands of Luther’s thought, rather than in an exclusive sense. The Augustinian concept of light is often connected to mystical ecstasis and rapture, Aristotelian passivity to mystical darkness, and the mystical image of the Cherubim and the shadow to the Incarnation. Thus in Luther’s theology we can see a rich interplay of different allegories and typologies taken from different traditions of medieval piety. All the three images and ways of defining faith, however, share common features and seem to be different ways of speaking about the same central ideas: Faith is divine activity and human receptivity. In faith, God is known directly and immediately but at the same time only partially and as an object exceeding human comprehension. As such an object exceeding human comprehension, God in faith captures the intellect and affect into admiration and joy and to follow the guidance of the divine light, both with regard to understanding and morals. The formal structure of the cognition of God in faith in Luther’s thought seems to be quite similar to Bonaventure’s concept of *cognitio per modum excessus*. In the next chapter we will discuss how Luther understands the function of faith as an intellectual and moral direction with regard to the universe.

### 3.3.2. The Light of Faith in Relation to the Universe

#### 3.3.2.1 Faith as Intellectual Illumination

In the previous chapter we examined the relation between the mind and God constituted by the divine light. In this chapter, we will investigate the divine light as it pertains to other objects understood and interpreted in that light as the light of understanding, i.e., the nature and function of faith as the theological intellect. The concept of faith as the

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laetitiae in hac miseria sanctis impartitae sint [13] stillae quaedam et tenues praegustus, qui cito transeant, plenitudo autem [14] revelata facie dei perfecta est manens in aeternum. ‘Haec enim est vita [15] aeterna, ut cognoscant te solum verum deum et quem misisti, Ihesum [16] [Joh. 17, 3.] Christum’, Iohan. 17.”

theological intellect is closely tied to the concept of “spirit”: faith is the spiritual intellect which makes the spirit alive, connects it with God and the invisible world and makes the human being a spiritual man.<sup>658</sup> In the passive sense, the spirit is the reception and indwelling of God in the human person by faith. In the active sense, it is the spiritual intellect: the ability to understand spiritual, invisible and intellectual things by the divine light of faith. Luther appears to hold that in his original state man possessed this spiritual intellect, but that it was obscured in the Fall, making the human being without it a sensual creature who, “like a horse and a mule”, is reliant on the visible. After the Fall, the intellect remains only in the natural or philosophical sense as something always connected to the visible world.<sup>659</sup> However, the proper intellect able to see the invisible is restored by faith. Therefore, one of the most common definitions of faith Luther gives is that faith is the theological intellect that grasps the invisible and spiritual things. However, it also has a function with regard to understanding such visible things as Christ and the Scriptures. These functions, though they might first seem to differ in terms of their objects, are actually connected in a manner that will be discussed below.

A large number of passages appear in Luther’s writings defining faith as the theological intellect in contrast to the philosophical intellect connected to visible things. For example, Luther states in the *Dictata super Psalterium*, in connection with Ps. 73:

‘Understanding’ [*intellectus*] or ‘instruction’ [*eruditio*] in the Psalm titles always refers to the invisible; to the spiritual; to that which cannot be seen but only grasped by the intellect and faith, wherever they are mentioned, whether good or bad. Therefore ‘to understand’ [*intelligere*] is used in the Scriptures in a different way than in philosophy, regardless of whether it is abstractive or universal, because philosophy always speaks of visible and apparent or sometimes of that which is deduced from the apparent. Faith, on the other hand, concerns the ‘non-apparent’ and that which is not deduced from the apparent. It is indeed from heaven, because that which is deduced from the apparent is always contrary to faith, as is evident.<sup>660</sup>

Luther also confirms the same view in the *scholia* to the first half of Ps. 118:34, “Give me understanding and I will explore your law,”<sup>661</sup>:

<sup>658</sup> See e.g. WA 55, I, 24, 1-2; gloss 13; 290 gloss 1; 292, 18 – 25; gloss 6; 520 gloss 17; WA 55, II, 121, 11-20; 179, 79 – 180, 107; 152, 2 – 153, 4; 220, 2 – 221, 15; 224, 2 – 6; 341, 94 – 343, 144; 452, 125 – 453, 156; 481, 481 – 488; AWA 2, 107, 14 – 108, 14; 132, 13-16; 200, 3 – 201, 7; WA 5, 418, 9-13; 623, 17-40. See also the analysis of the concept of the “intellect” on p. 112.

<sup>659</sup> See the analysis of animal and carnal life on pp. 121-124. See also Cranz 2000, 162-164 who notes the continuity between Luther’s definition and ancient modes of intellection. However, Cranz does not distinguish between faith as apprehending God and faith as understanding created reality, of which only the latter is the object of the intellect of faith.

<sup>660</sup> WA 55, II, 481, 481-488: “[481] 73, 1 3, 50734 Bl 115 ‘**Intellectus**’ vel ‘eruditio’ in Titulis psalmorum positum semper Indicat [482] Inuisibilia, spiritualia, que videri nequeunt, Sed solo intellectu et fide [483] attingi possunt, ibi dici, siue bona siue mala. Vnde ‘Intelligere’ in [484] 3, 508 Scrip[tura aliter | quam in philosophia capitur, siue sit abstractiua siue vniuersalis, [485] quia philosophia semper de visibilibus et apparentibus, vel saltem [486] ex apparentibus deducta loquitur, fides autem Est ‘non apparentium’, [487] nec ex apparentibus deducta; immo de cēlo est, Cum ex apparentibus potius [488] contrarium fidei semper deducatur, vt patet.”

<sup>661</sup> WA 55, II, 916, 751-752: “Da mihi intellectum; et Scruta[bor leg]em t[ua]m et Custodi[am] [752] [illam] in tot[o cord]e m[eo].”

Thus Psalm 31 says: ‘Do not be like a horse and a mule which have no understanding’. Because before that he made an offer, saying: ‘I will give you understanding and instruct you on this way’, etc. Therefore understanding [*intellectus*] is from the Lord alone, as he says: ‘They will all be taught by God’. Therefore this understanding is not that of the philosophers or the natural understanding, by which we observe or speculate visible things, but it is theological and given as a gift [*gratuitus*], and by it through faith non-apparent things are contemplated. Therefore it is called ‘the Spirit of wisdom and understanding’. When it dwells in us we can explore the law in the right way, that is, seek in an innermost way what it has in spirit. For the Gospel gives understanding through which the old law is revealed and thoroughly examined.<sup>662</sup>

Similar descriptions of the nature of the theological intellect are found in Luther’s other works as well. In the *Lectures on Romans* he states:

There is no one who understands. This is because the Wisdom of God is hidden, unknown to the world. ‘The Word has become flesh’ and Wisdom incarnate, and through this it has become hidden so that it cannot be attained without the intellect, as Christ is not known without revelation. And because of this, those who are wise in the visible things (as are all people without faith and those who do not know God and the future life) do not understand, do not think, i.e., are not intelligent, not wise, but foolish and blind.<sup>663</sup>

A bit further on he continues his explanation of the nature of the intellect he speaks of:

This intellect, which is spoken of here, is faith itself, or knowledge of things invisible and believed. It is hidden, because it is understanding of those things which a human being cannot know by himself, as in John 6: ‘No one comes to the Father except by me’ and again: ‘No one comes to me unless my Father has drawn him.’ And to Peter: ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because it is not flesh and blood that has revealed this to you, but my Father who is in Heaven.’<sup>664</sup>

<sup>662</sup> WA 55, II, 916, 753 – 917, 761: “[753] Sic Psal. 31.: ‘Nolite fieri sicut equus et mulus, quibus non est intellectus.’ [754] Quia prius obtulit d[omi]n[us] dicens: ‘Intellectum tibi dabo et instruam te in via [755] 4, 324 hac’ etc. | Igitur Intellectus est a Domino solo, sicut dicit: ‘Erunt omnes [756] docibiles dei’. Quare non est philosophorum aut naturalis iste intellectus, [757] quo etiam visibilia speculamur, Sed theologicus et gratuitus, quo per [758] fidem res non apparentes contemplamur. Ideo Vocatur ‘Spiritus sapientie [759] et intellectus’. Quo habito possumus recte Scrutari legem, i. e. intime [760] exquirere, quid habeat in spiritu; Euangelium enim dat intellectum, per [761] quem vetus lex reuelatur et perscrutatur.”

<sup>663</sup> WA 56, 237, 19-26: “[19] **Non est Intelligens [3, 11].** [20] Quia Sapientia Dei in abscondito est, incognita mundo. ‘Verbum enim [21] caro factum est’ et Sapientia incarnata ac per hoc abscondita nec nisi [22] intellectu attingibilis, Sicut Christus non nisi reuelatione cognoscibilis. [23] Quare qui de visibilibus et in visibilibus sapientes sunt (quales sunt omnes [24] homines extra fidem et qui Deum ignorant ac futuram vitam), non intelligunt, [25] non sapiunt, i. e. non sunt intelligentes, non sapientes, Sed insipientes [26] et ceteri”

<sup>664</sup> WA 56, 238, 8 – 239, 5: “Intellectus iste, de quo hic loquitur, Est Ipsa fides seu notitia Inuisibilium [1] et credibilium. Ideo est intellectus in abscondito, quia eorum, [2] que homo ex seipso nosse non potest, Vt Iohann. 6.: ‘Nemo venit ad patrem [3] nisi per me.’ Et iterum: ‘Nemo venit ad me, nisi pater meus traxerit eum.’ [4] Et ad Petrum: ‘Beatus es, Simon Bariona, quia Caro et Sanguis non [5] reuelauit tibi, Sed pater meus, qui est in celis.’”

The *Operationes in Psalmos* also contains a lengthy definition of the theological intellect:

Therefore intellect [*intellectus*] and education [*eruditione*] are necessary, through which you will transcend these and, despising the visible, be elevated to the invisible; not minding those which are upon earth, but those which are above, where Christ is, etc. The word *understand* in Hebrew is *hascilu* because it signifies an absolute state: *make intelligent*, that is, yourselves – as Jerome explains – or others, that is, do so, make haste that you would be intelligent and think heavenly and spiritual things, as we say in our vernacular: ‘Seynd vveys und vorstendig’, a similar expression as Ps 31: ‘Do not be like a horse and a mule which have no understanding’.

This intellect is not that of which the philosophers opine, but it is faith itself which can see both in prosperous and adverse things that which is not visible. Therefore, not saying what it is that should be understood, he says in an absolute way: *Understand*, that is, make it so, that you would be intelligent, take care, that you would be believing. For that which faith understands has no name or form [*speciem*]. Prosperity or adversity in present things completely subverts everyone who does not understand the invisible by faith. For this intellect comes from faith, according to this: ‘If you will not believe, you will not understand’, and it is entrance into that cloud in which everything that the human senses, reason, mind or intellect can comprehend is overwhelmed. For faith unites the soul with the invisible, ineffable, innominable, eternal, incogitable Word of God and at the same time separates it from all that is visible. This is the Cross and ‘passover’ of the Lord, in which he predicates this necessary intellect.

*Receive instruction, judges of the Earth.* Augustine understands this as a tautology. Also this word *receive instruction* [*erudimini*] is in the absolute state, signifying: Act, so that you would have been instructed, that is, uprooted from the raw and animal senses and affects of sensual things and opinions, so that you would not think childishly of Christ and his Kingdom. ‘The animal man [man with a soul] does not perceive those things which are God’s’ (1. Cor. 2). To me, receiving instruction [*eruditio*] seems to signify the drawing away of the heart from perishable things, as well as understanding [*intellectus*] seems to signify turning toward and apprehension of eternal things. The former is accomplished by the Cross in the mortification of the flesh, the latter by faith in the vivification of the spirit.

665

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<sup>665</sup> AWA 2, 107, 10 – 108, 14: “Ideo intellectu opus est et eruditione, quibus haec transcendatis et visibilibus contemptis in invisibilia rapiamini non sapientes ea, quae super terram, sed quae sursum sunt, ubi Christus est etc <Col 3,1s>. Proinde verbum *intelligite* in Hebraeo sonat *hascilu*, quod absoluto statu significat: *intelligites facite*, scilicet vosmetipsos - ut Hieronymus exponit - vel alios, hoc est: sic agite, hoc contendite, ut sitis intelligentes et spiritualia ac caelestia sapiatis, quod nostra vernacula dicimus: ‘Seynd vveys und vorstendig’, simili sententia, qua Ps 31<9>: ‘Nolite fieri sicut equus et mulus, quibus non est intellectus’. Est autem haec intelligentia, non de qua philosophi opinantur, sed fides ipsa, quae in rebus prosperis et adversis potest ea videre, quae non videntur. Ideo non exprimens, quae intelligant, absolute dicit *intelligite*, id est, facite, ut sitis intelligentes, curate, ut sitis creduli. Non enim habent nomen nequem speciem ea, qua fides intelligit. Nam praesentium rerum prosperitas vel adversitas penitus subvertit omnem hominem, qui fide non intelligit invisibilia. Hic enim intellectus ex fide venit, iuxta illud <Is 7,9>: ‘Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis’, et est ingressus ille caliginis, in qua absorbetur, quicquid sensus, ratio, mens intellectusque hominis comprehendere potest. Coniungit enim fides animam cum invisibili, ineffabili, innominabili, aeterno, incogitabili verbo dei simulque separat ab omnibus visibilibus, et haec est crux et ‘phase’ domini, in quo necessarium praedicat hunc intellectum. *Erudimini iudices terrae* Augustinus tautologice dictum accipit. Est autem et hoc verbum *erudimini* absoluti status pro eo, quod est: Agite, ut

However, one can ask if Luther uses the term *intellectus* for the capacity to understand, or for the content of understanding. One could argue that, by the theological use of term intellect, Luther does not refer to the human capacity, but to a theological ‘understanding’ of facts. That is, that the term refers to interpretation of things ‘in the light of faith’, as metaphorically ‘seen’ or grasped with the help of Christian teaching and doctrine. Indeed, Luther asserts at least twice that the terms “mind” and “intellect” refer in the Scriptures to their object and act or actuality (*actus*), not to the powers of the soul (*potentia animae*).<sup>666</sup> One could consequently posit that the intellect is theological when it thinks about theological objects.<sup>667</sup> However, it does not follow from this, that the theological objects of the intellect are propositional in nature. The issue is more complicated. The primary question to be solved is that of how Luther understands the nature of the object of the intellect and the relationship of the intellect to it. Is the object of theological intellect propositional doctrine, or is there a more fundamental level of epistemology involved? The texts examined above, as well as a great number of similar passages, show that the answer must be yes. According to Luther, the true intellect is a gift of God given by faith and grace. It alone sees the invisible things in contrast to the natural reason or natural intellect, senses and vision, which focus on the visible and apparent things.<sup>668</sup> From a careful analysis of Luther’s texts it becomes clear that the above and similar sentences express not a metaphorical view of the term “intellect”, but rather are related to the ontological status of the theological intellect. The theological intellect is not a ‘natural capacity’ of man, but is actualized in illumination by the light of faith, so that its objects are the light of faith itself (i.e., God), and the intellectual and spiritual things (understood

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sitis eruditi, hoc est, e rudibus animalibusque sensuum et sensilium rerum affectibus et opinionibus eruti, ut non puerliter de Christo regnoque eius sentiatis. ‘Animalis enim homo non percipit ea, quae dei sunt’ (1Cor 2<,14>). Mihi autem eruditio videtur significare aversionem cordis a rebus pereuntibus, sicut intellectus conversionem et apprehensionem rerum aeternarum. Illam crux operatur in carnis mortificatione, hanc fides in spiritus vivificatione.”

<sup>666</sup> WA 55, II, 179, 79-89: “Et hoc vult Titulus | dicens: **Eruditio** [80] **David**. Quia **intellectu** per fidem de istis docemur Et non sensu aut [81] ratione. [82] ‘Intellectus’ in scrip[tur]is sanctis potius ab obiecto quam potentia nomen [83] habet, contrario quam in philosophia. Est enim ‘Intellectus’ cognitio [84] vel notitia ‘sensus Christi’, de quo Apostolus 1. Corin. 1. et 2. excellenter [85] docet, quoniam ‘Sapientiam loquimur’, inquit, ‘absconditam in mysterio, [86] quam nemo principum huius seculi cognovit.’ Et est breuiter nihil aliud [87] nisi sapientia crucis Christi, que ‘gentibus stultitia et Iudeis Scandalum est’, [88] Scil. intelligere, Quod filius Dei est incarnatus et crucifixus et mortuus et [89] suscitatus propter nostram salutem.”

WA 57, a74, 20 – a75, 6: “[**20**] **Insensati** [**3**, **1**]. [21] ‘Noys’ Grece, quod Latine significat ‘mentem’ seu pocius sensum ipsum [22] mentis, seu ut vulgo dicitur, dictamen rationis. Non enim in Scripturis [23] accipitur ‘mens’ pro potencia anime seu pro habitu, sed magis pro actu. [24] Unde transfertur varie. 1. Co. 2.: ‘Quis cognovit sensum Domini?’ [25] At Luce 2.: ‘Dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.’ Inde in Scripturis [26] frequenter eciam ‘consilium’, ‘cogitatio’, ‘intellectus’ vocatur, ut psal. 32.: [27] ‘Dominus dissipat consilia Gencium, reprobatur autem cogitationes principum’ [1] etc. Et psal. 81.: ‘Nescierunt neque intellexerunt.’ Ioannis 11.: [2] ‘Vos nescitis quicquam nec cogitatis.’ Igitur ‘mens’ est actuosa illa [3] cogitatio singula ponderans exquisite, econtra ‘amencia’ dormitans illa [4] inconsideracio omnia passive suscipiens. Sic 1. Petri 4.: ‘Christo passo [5] in carne et vos eadem cogitatione armamini’, i. e. cogitate et intelligite, [6] quod et vos ad eandem imaginem oporteat pati.”

<sup>667</sup> This kind of interpretation is given by Lohse 1958, 38-41 and Schwarz 1962, 135 among others.

<sup>668</sup> WA 55, I 290 gloss 1; 346, 22-23; 346-347 gloss 2; 386, 5-10; 388, 4-11; 630, 19 – 632, 2; 630-632 glosses 2, 4, 7 and 8; 704, 21-23; 705 gloss 9; 772, 21 – 774, 11; 780 gloss 52; 798, 4-7; 806 gloss 140; WA 55, II, 121, 11-20; 156, 18 – 158, 17; 178, 79 – 180, 99; 220, 2 – 221, 15; 222, 57 – 223, 66; 511, 154 – 512, 165; 604, 2-7; 734, 109-122; 758, 50-52; 769, 180 – 770, 218; 903, 342-367; 937, 1319-1331; 1008, 3397-3412; WA 56, 228, 12-13; 237, 19-28; 238, 28 – 239, 8; 336, 7-17; WA 57, b185, 9 – b186, 12; AWA 2, 132, 9-16; 200, 2 – 201, 2; WA 5, 418, 9-15.



to be present in the visible object by the light of faith). The opinions of existentialist Luther researchers who deny the connection of faith to an anthropological capacity are correct, if we consider the capacities as belonging to the natural constitution of the human being. However, it clarifies the issue to consider faith (i.e., the theological intellect) as a capacity given by grace itself, or at least as analogous to such a capacity – in the sense it has an anthropological function analogous to the superior part of the intellect. However, it is not a capacity possessed by the human being, but rather created, sustained and actualized by the illumination of faith alone.

As we saw in the previous chapter examining the cognition of God in faith, Luther understands the relationship between the ontological and cognitive nature of the light of faith in the terms of Augustinian illumination, Aristotelian receptivity and mystical union. Consequently, for Luther the creation of the theological intellect is also an act of illumination and union. Luther often refers to the process of the creation of the intellect of faith as *eruditio* (“instruction”, “teaching”, “education”). In this process the human being is drawn away from rude sensual things and made to understand, grasp and embrace the invisible and spiritual things in Christ. This concept of *eruditio* thus means a recognition of and experiential knowledge of the spiritual goods. It is achieved in immediate contact with those goods (ultimately God) and in withdrawal of the soul by grace from the created goods. One can also distinguish, as Luther does in the passage from the *Operationes in Psalmos* quoted above, between 1) *eruditio* as a drawing away from the sensual, through the Cross and the tribulations; and 2) the creation of the intellect and infusion of faith as *the grasping* of Christ and the spiritual and invisible goods in him. Moreover, in this process the person is not only drawn away from the sensual, but is created anew as a spiritual person. This creation anew is necessary because the understanding of the theological objects is possible only for the new creation of faith, the *novus homo interior*.<sup>669</sup> What is important is the ontological nature of the object of faith. The object of faith is Christ as the internal Word, working through the external word. In this process Christ grants the believer the understanding of the external (i.e., access to the spiritual internal goods hidden in external things). The internal eternal Word *is* the understanding, which shows the invisible in the external Word and incarnational reality.<sup>670</sup> In this sense, the subject and object of faith are both divine.<sup>671</sup> The subject is divine, as having become a partaker of the divine nature as participant in Christ.<sup>672</sup> The objects are divine things

<sup>669</sup> WA 55, I, 290, 4; 290 gloss 1; 360 gloss 1; 362 glosses 10 and 11; 520, 4-8; 520 glosses 17 and 18; 524 gloss 1; 546, 9-10; 546 gloss 1; WA 55, II, 56, 19 – 58, 1; 123, 24 – 124, 20; 224, 2-7; 238, 52-29; 240, 33-52; 481, 481-488; 944, 2970-2980; AWA 2, 107, 10 – 108, 14; WA 5, 410, 31 – 411, 34. See also chapter 2.4.2.1.

<sup>670</sup> Luther speaks in at least two ways of this distinction. The first is the distinction between letter and spirit. In this context, Luther refers to the letter as an empty, hollow and a slow reed (*calamus*) which is given content by the Spirit, a reed that is either contrasted to the letter as a quickly writing reed, or to a live tongue, which gives the spiritual understanding of the external letter. See WA 55, II, 243, 90 – 245, 155; 246, 182-195; 323, 378 – 325, 427; 430, 132 – 432, 204. The second is the distinction between the external and the internal Word. Luther affirms that the external word is imperfect and and unintelligible until God speaks with his internal Word (i.e., faith), which unites the believer with the invisible and gives the correct understanding of the external Word as referring to its internal and invisible consummation. See WA 55, I, 220 gloss 9; WA 56, 406, 16 – 410, 19.

<sup>671</sup> AWA 2, 107, 20 – 108, 5; 292, 18 – 293, 10.

<sup>672</sup> See chapter 3.3.1.1.

existing in and under the external visible signs.<sup>673</sup> Thus the content of faith is not propositional in the primary sense. Luther emphasizes the point, that externally hearing, that Christ is God is not enough, if God does not in the spirit internally reveal this to be true.<sup>674</sup> Thus even the text in which Luther speaks of intellect as referring to the object and not capacity continues with the definition of *eruditio* and *intellectus* as the knowledge of invisible, divine and celestial things. However, this knowledge is connected to Christ. There is no true intellect (or only a dead and empty intellect) unless it is actualized in connection to Christ in faith.<sup>675</sup> This is the sense in which the intellect is not a power of the soul (as it does not belong to the soul's natural constitution), but rather requires the external light of faith in order to be actualized. Accordingly, Luther describes the creation of faith as the removal of the impediment of the intellect (that is, ignorance) by divine illumination. This illumination purifies and teaches the intellect and affect and liberates and justifies the heart. Luther speaks of it also as the writing in the heart of the believer by the finger of the Holy Spirit of living, shining and burning letters which illumine and kindle the heart. He refers to this entire process as divine instruction (*divina eruditio*).<sup>676</sup>

<sup>673</sup> See chapters 2.2.3 and 2.3.

<sup>674</sup> WA 55, II, 734, 109-118: "[109] 93, 8 **Intelligite insipientes in populo; et stulti aliquando sapite.** [110] Quia Deus in humanitate apparuit, non potuit ex sensibus nisi homo percipi; [111] ideo intellectu opus est, quem dat fides. Isaie 7.: 'Nisi credideritis, [112] non permanebitis.' Caro et sanguis nunquam possent reuelare hunc hominem [113] Bl 185 v esse Deum verum, nisi spiritus prius reuelaret et\* spiritui crederetur. [114] Non enim sufficit reuelari et audire Christum esse Deum, nisi quis [115] consentiat auditis et reuelatis; alioquin quis non audiuit? Si ergo intellectus [116] 93, 9 habetur, facile persuadetur quod sequitur: **Qui plantauit aurem, non [117] audiet?** Ideo premisit: 'Intelligite et sapite', alioquin frustra suadetur et [118] auditur."

<sup>675</sup> WA 55, II, 179, 79 – 180, 107: "Et hoc vult Titulus | dicens: **Eruditio [80] Dauid.** Quia **intellectu** per fidem de istis docemur Et non sensu aut [81] ratione. [82] 'Intellectus' in scrip[turis sanctis potius ab obiecto quam potentia nomen [83] habet, contrario quam in philosophia. Est enim 'Intellectus' cognitio [84] vel notitia 'sensus Christi', de quo Apostolus 1. Corin. 1. et 2. excellenter [85] docet, quoniam 'Sapientiam loquimur', inquit, 'absconditam in mysterio, [86] quam nemo principum huius sæculi cognouit.' Et est breuiter nihil aliud [87] nisi sapientia crucis Christi, que 'gentibus stultitia et Iudæis Scandalum est', [88] Scil. intelligere, Quod filius Dei est incarnatus et crucifixus et mortuus et [89] suscitatus propter nostram salutem. De huius sapientie Intellectu intelligitur [90] titulus Psal[mi], quando dicit: 'Eruditio Dauid' vel 'Intellectus Dauid', [91] scil. ipsi datus. Sed quia totum hoc est in fide et non in sensu neque ratione, [92] Ideo Etiam Intellectus hominum in scrip[turis dicitur Sensualitas, [93] eo quod non nisi sensibilia capiat, quantumcunque sit subtilis et acutus et [94] prudens. Sic Apost[olus] ait 'Prudentia carnis' i. e. carnalis hominis, qui [95] vtique habet intellectum, in quo sit prudentia, 'mors est'. Quare hic dicit: [96] 31, 9 **Sicut equus et mulus**, sic sunt omnes, **qui hunc intellectum non [97] habent**, qui est de Inuisibilibus, diuinis et celestibus, eo quod solum visibilia [98] intelligant et sentiant, quod etiam 'equus et mulus' facit. Intelligere [99] itaque est Spiritualia et mysteria salutis et gratiæ Dei agnoscere; vnde [100] vsus loquendi obtinuit dicere mysteria redemptionis et incarnationis, eo [101] quod non nisi mysticis pateant et spiritualibus, Non autem hominibus, [102] quibus est potius stultitia, quia ipsi sunt stulti 'equi et muli'; ideo primum [103] illos oportet mutari, vt sic mysteria, que sunt æterna, cognoscant. Qualis [104] enim quisque est, taliter Iudicat. Sed ipsi sunt 'equi et muli'; ideo ista pro [105] nihilo Iudicant, quia non sentiunt ea. Tales sunt, qui de immortalitate [106] anime, de Inferno et celo et Deo, de Christo fabulas esse putant. Et Iudæi [107] precipue de Christo, Et post illos heretici similitur."

<sup>676</sup> WA 55, II, 743, 105 – 744, 116: "[105] Bl 188 Tercio ex terrore et minis allicit. Quia si 'super omnes deos Magnus', [106] ergo nullus potest de manu eius eruere. Deut. 32.: 'Et non est, qui de manu [107] mea possit eruere.' Qui ergo nec potestate nec dignitate nec bonitate, quibus [108] ille rex magnus est, mouetur, quomodo potest moueri? Sine dubio insensibilis [109] est. Narratur autem ideo potissimum magnitudo eius, Quia [110] homo est in terra visus; ideo a Iudæis non reputatur Deus, vt non sint excusabiles, [111] si non veniant. Et ita remouet Impedimentum intellectus, scil. [112] ignorantiam. Consequenter etiam impedimentum affectus, scil. 'Quoniam [113] non repellat Dominus' etc., licet etiam ante remouerit idem, Quoniam [114] Magnus Dominus. Immo vbicunque illuminat, simul accendit, simul [115] erudit intellectum

What is clear from this description is that the knowledge of spiritual things comes *ab extra*, through divine revelation received internally. Unfortunately, Luther does not give a very clear description of how this illumination technically functions with regard to the intellect. Nevertheless, certain preliminary points can be noted.

First, as pointed out earlier, Luther often refers to the intellect as “the eye of the mind”.<sup>677</sup> Consequently, he describes original sin as “blindness of the intellect”. The remaining eyes of the flesh (or the eyes of reason) are “bestial” and not proper to man, because they are fixed on the visible things, turned away from God who is the truth, the proper object of the intellect.<sup>678</sup> In the infusion of faith God illumines the eye of the mind and removes its blindness so that believers can see God, even in all things.<sup>679</sup> Luther refers to this event as the “removal of the veil of the letter”, or “the veil of Moses”.<sup>680</sup> This figure aptly illustrates Luther’s understanding of faith: With regard to the objects of comprehension, their external and sensual covering is removed, so that their internal and invisible content can be grasped. Here the veil stands for the sensual covering, the letter. Luther refers to the veil which covered the face of Moses so that the brightness of God, which shone from his face because he had looked at God face to face, was not seen by the “sensual” Jews. With regard to the subject who comprehends, however, the veil of the letter also refers to the Tabernacle as a representation of the human being, as its interior

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et affectum, sicut est natura lucis. Prius enim purgavit, [116] cum dixit: ‘Venite exultemus Domino’ etc., Qui vocavit de loco, vbi sunt.”

WA 2, 469, 7-20: “Ab hac igitur impuritate [8] [Apgsch. 15, 9.] cordis nihil nisi fides liberat, ut Act. xv. Fide purificans corda eorum, [9] [Tit. 1, 15.] ut sic stet verbum Pauli Tit. i. Omnia munda mundis, immundis vero et [10] [Röm. 2, 21.] incredulis nihil mundum. Eadem regula Rho. ij. dicit: Qui doces non furandum, [11] furaris &c. interprete beato Augustino: ‘furaris’, scilicet non opere [12] quod doces non faciendum, sed rea voluntate. [13] Quare nisi doctrina fidei, qua cor purificatur et iustificatur, reveletur, [14] omnis omnium praeceptorum eruditio literalis et paterna traditio est. Praeceptum [15] enim docet, quae sint facienda. Quae cum fuerint impossibilia, [16] doctrina fidei (id est Euangelium) docet, quo modo fiant possibilia. Haec [17] enim docet ad gratiam dei confugere et implorare ipsummet deum Magistrum [18] et doctorem, qui digito sui spiritus scribat in corda nostra suas literas vivas [19] et lucentes et ardentes, quibus illuminati et accensi clamemus ‘abba, pater’. [20] Et haec non est paterna, sed divina eruditio.”

<sup>677</sup> See p. 99, with reference to WA 55, I, 278, 2-4; 278 gloss 11, 12-17; WA 55, II, 170, 17-18. See also WA 55, I, 770, 6-7; 774, 9-11; 790, 23-27; WA 55, II, 342, 118-119; 903, 342-367; WA 5, 479, 12-18.

<sup>678</sup> WA 55, II, 903, 350-360. See also WA 55, I, 704, 21-23; 705 gloss 9; WA 55, II, 524, 517-518; WA 56, 75 gloss 1; 312, 6-10; 355, 19-26; 356, 17 – 357, 17; WA 57, a89, 2-19; WA 2, 537, 25 – 538, 17.

<sup>679</sup> WA 55, I, 632, 15-16: “**Et desepxit** heb[reus: ‘respicit’<sup>14</sup> .<sup>15</sup> **oculus meus** personalis Vel mysticus, qui est omnis illuminatus fide **inimicos meos** Iudeos”

WA 55, I, 770, 4-10: “**viuifica me** per gratiam fidei in spiritu **et custodiam sermones tuos** sic viuens, vt proposui q. d. Mortui enim non possunt custodire<sup>13</sup>. [118, 18 ] **Reuela** per lucem fidei **oculos meos** mentis, qui sunt mei proprie, non bestiarum : **et consyderabo** illustratus scil. **mirabilia de lege tua** quia sicut Christus, ita et verbum eius est ‘mirabile’, scil. Euangelium. [118, 19] **Incola ego sum in terra** q. d. necesse habeo illuminari et gratificari, quia non sum angelus, Sed homo”

WA 55, II, 524, 515-518: “Hic autem dicit, quod intus de illis tractabit, scil. in spiritu, [516] spiritualia eorum intuendo, Vbi oculi carnis ea videre nequeunt. Et [517] quid moramur? Omnia olim facta mirabilia Vsque hodie fiunt per fidem; [518] fides enim cecos illuminat, claudos stabilat, surdos audire facit.”

See also WA 55, I, 774, 9-11; 790, 21-27; WA 55, II, 649, 136-148; 903, 342-364; WA 56, 308, 21-24.

<sup>680</sup> WA 55, I, 474, 2-6: “**illuminet** per fidei gratiam in Christo **vultum suum super nos** ‘auferendo velamen’ literę et dorsum. **et misereatur nostri** est repetitio eiusdem, Sed non est in hebreo. **Sela**. [66, 3] Sic illuminet **Vt cognoscamus** intellectu et affectu **in terra** Iudea **viam tuam** i. e. que tibi placet et qua ad te peruenitur, que est Christus”

WA 55, II, 903, 342-343: “[342] 118, 18 **Reuela Oculos meos**, i. e. reuelabis prophetice. Vel scil. mentis mee [343] per lucem spiritualis intelligentie, amoto velo Mosi.”

was separated from the forecourt by a veil.<sup>681</sup> Through faith, a person enters through the first veil into the Sanctuary and is changed from the external man into the internal man, so that his eye is turned towards the invisible things which reside within.<sup>682</sup> Having turned away from the created things, he now sees God face-to-face, as did Moses.<sup>683</sup> This vision takes place in the light of faith: the light of the face of God of Ps. 4:7, the central text in the tradition of illumination.<sup>684</sup> It is revelation given by the Holy Spirit from Heaven. Thus Luther even speaks of illumination as elevation by the Spirit to the contemplation of divine things and of the divinity of Christ. Noteworthy here with regard to the function of the light as the light of understanding (i.e., the intellect) is that the light of faith and the face-to-face vision of God especially signify the revelation of the divinity of Christ. The light of the faith thus shows that Christ crucified is God. Luther stresses that in this life the believer should occupy himself with the vision, knowledge and clarity of God given by the spiritual light of faith.<sup>685</sup> In this sense, the light of faith is not immediate and open to all, but connected to the humanity of Christ. It is received only through Christ and in connection with Christ, who as the Incarnate Word purifies the eyes of the heart. He is the

<sup>681</sup> There were two veils in the Tabernacle, the first between the forecourt and the holy, the second between the holy and the Holy of Holies. Among other things, the veils represent for Luther the transition from the Synagogue to the Church by the light of faith, and the progression from the Church Militant to the heavenly glory by the light of glory. See chapters 2.3.3.3, 2.4.1.1, 3.2.3 and 3.4.2.

<sup>682</sup> WA 55, I, 631 gloss 8: "GLOSSA:<sup>8</sup>) maxime, quia malis bene est, Bonis autem male, quod nullus hominum potest concordare Nisi spiritu reuelante, vt psal. 72.: 'Donec intrem in sanctuarium Domini'. Hec enim per intellectum et fidem tantummodo cognoscuntur."

WA 55, II, 342, 115-121: "Vnde ait: 'Existimabam [116] vt cognoscerem, hoc labor est ante me', scil. ex mea inuestigatione id non [117] apprehenderem, nisi per fidem mihi reuelaretur aliunde, scil. a Deo; ideo [118] sequitur: 'donec intrem', scil. per fidem a visibilibus vertendo oculum ad [119] Inuisibilia, 'in sanctuarium Dei', i. e. in mysterium et Ecclesiam et sanctum [120] non seculare Sed spirituale, 'Et sic intelligam', i. e. intelligens fiam, [121] 'in nouissimis eorum.'"

See also WA 55, I, 520 glosses 17 and 18.

<sup>683</sup> See WA 55, I, 244 gloss 11; 476 gloss 3. See also footnote 600.

<sup>684</sup> On Luther's interpretation of this Psalm, see chapter 3.2.3.

<sup>685</sup> WA 55, II, 740, 8 – 741, 36: "[8] 94, 2 **Preoccupemus faciem eius**. Hoc primo exponitur de aduentu eius, [9] tam primo quam secundo. Secundo et melius, vt in glosa. Quia Apostolo [10] docente sepe dictum est, Quomodo nos reuelata facie gloriam Domini speculamur. [11] Ergo faciem Domini in hac vita nullus videt nisi per fidem. Quare [12] 'preoccupare faciem eius' Est fide preuenire diuinitatis eius, vt Psal. 4.: [13] 'Signatus est super nos lumen vultus tui, Domine'. Breuiter ergo 'facies [14] Domini' Est ipsa reuelatio diuinitatis Christi, que sub litera fuit velata [15] et humanitate, sicut facies Mosi sub velamine. Sed ascenso celo reuelauit [16] eam per spiritum sanctum, sicut promisit dicens: 'Ille me clarificabit'. [17] Vnde recte addit 'in confessione', vt exprimat quo modo facies eius [18] possit preoccupari, scil. non in clara visione, Sed in fide et confessione. [19] Fides enim confitetur Domino. Et notandum, quod [20] [1.] 'preoccupare' primo ponitur vt in glosa, Scil. contra diabolum, ne [21] ab eo preoccupemur. [2.] Secundo, i. e. ante omnia et pre omnibus festinemus [22] hanc fidem occupare, q. d. Caueamus omni modo, ne aliquid huic [23] preferamus aut aliud occupemus vel potius occupemur, Sicut illi qui dixerunt: [24] 'Villam emi, habe me excusatum'. Illi enim volunt prius sua occupare [25] et ea, que Christi sunt, nouissime querere, Contra verbum Domini: 'primum [26] querite regnum celorum et hec omnia adiciuntur vobis'. Sic et Iudei [27] prius sua quam spiritualia quesierunt. Et ita videtur Apostolus intelligere, [28] Quando exhortatur secundum hunc psalmum dicens [Hebr. 4.]: 'festinemus [29] ergo ingredi in requiem illam'. Q. d. omnia postponamus et ante [30] omnia hanc faciem occupemus, etiam si alia nunquam contingeret occupare. [31] Hoc enim iustum et equum est. Iniquum autem est prius dorsum (i. e. [32] literam) occupare et ignorantiam Christi. Sicut enim facies Christi est notitia [33] Christi, que est per fidem eius et lumen spiritus, Ita dorsum eius est [34] ignorantia eius, que est per infidelitatem et cecitatem literę. Ergo ante [35] omnia hanc notitiam, hanc fidem, hanc faciem, hoc lumen spiritus, hanc [36] claritatem festinemus occupare. [Sic Psal. 87.: 'Et oratio mea pre[ue]niet [37] te', etc.] [3.] "

See also WA 55, I, 290 gloss 1; 299 gloss 3; 348 gloss 2; 780 gloss 52; WA 55, II, 337, 2-5.

content of faith both as human and as God, and is the access (*accessus*) to the spiritual and intellectual world. The incarnatorial aspect is thus a defining factor of the light of faith, which separates it from the light of glory. However, the intellect of faith is not limited only to understanding the divinity of Christ. It also provides understanding of intellectual and spiritual things in Christ: that is, in Christ and along with Christ. The entire spiritual and intellectual world is opened through him – but only through him.<sup>686</sup> This understanding extends to the understanding of Christ as the true content of all things. In this sense, the spiritual and intellectual world is not limited to Christ, but it contains the understanding of all things in the eternal Word. However, one can also say, that there is no spiritual world besides Christ, because all spiritual things reside in him and point to him as the reality signified by all things and as their final end.<sup>687</sup> Thus even though the aspect of the humanity of Christ remains a defining factor between the light of faith and the light of glory, nevertheless the distinction between the light of faith and the light of glory lies not in that the object of the light of faith is only Christ in a limited and restrictive sense. Rather, the distinction lies in (1) the necessity of the Incarnate One as the “access” (*accessus*) to the understanding of the invisible world, and (2) the difference in the degree of clarity between the light of faith and the light of glory. In faith, God and the spiritual world are seen only enigmatically, not yet in full clarity and with direct vision, as they will be in the light of glory.<sup>688</sup>

Second, in the previous chapter we discussed the ontological nature of the light of faith with regard to God and discerned three approaches: Augustinian, Aristotelian and mystical. Here, however, the question is: what is the ontological nature of the light as an agent of intellection with regard to the created things that are understood by it? As noted above, Luther holds that the light of the natural reason creates an impediment for the spiritual light, and it must be extinguished or made darkness in order for the spiritual light to be received.<sup>689</sup> Luther describes the light of faith as “the light of truth” (*lumen veritatis*) which illumines the intellect like the visible light illumines the bodily eyes.<sup>690</sup> The proper object of the intellect is truth (*veritas*), and it is precisely this light which makes the believer capable of understanding spiritual truths.<sup>691</sup> Through the light of the intellect, the

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<sup>686</sup> See e.g. WA 55, I, 360 gloss 1; WA 55, II, 220, 2 - 15; 718, 11-16; 801, 51 - 802,73; WA 56, 298, 21 - 300, 8; 407, 12-28. On the role of the human nature of Christ as the access to the spiritual world, see also chapter 3.4.2.

<sup>687</sup> See e.g. WA 55, I, 486 gloss 7, 4-10; WA 55, II, 342, 126-140. On Christ as the end and reality signified by all things see also chapter 2.3.1.

<sup>688</sup> See WA 55, II, 590, 21 - 591, 33; 652, 229-230; 801, 68 - 802, 73; WA 57, a55, 14-24; WA 2, 457, 20-33.

<sup>689</sup> WA 55, II, 722, 134-142; WA 56, 238, 28 - 239, 9; 356, 17 - 357, 17.

<sup>690</sup> WA 55, I, 790, 23-27: “**Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum** euangelium et totius Scrip[tur]e, Aug[ustinus]: quia verbum vocis continet veritatem pro intellectu, sicut lucerna lumen pro oculis : **et lumen veritatis**, que sola intellectum illuminat, sicut solis radii visibiles oculos **semitis meis**”

<sup>691</sup> WA 55, II, 722, 134-142: “[134] 91, 3 Et Quod dictum est **veritatem per noctem**, ‘Nox’ hic et ‘mane’ pro [135] eodem possunt capi, sicut et misericordia et veritas idem sunt et per idem [136] ‘annunciare’ nunciantur. Est enim Christus et verbum Christi misericordia [137] et veritas, Sed ideo distinguit, Quia Veritas proprię intellectum respicit. [138] Sed hunc oportet noctem fieri et captuari, vt non sua luce offendat in [139] veritatem. Cum enim veritas sit lux intelligibilis, Lux autem spargitur [140] non per lucem, Sed per tenebras, Et Sic, Quia simul non stant in intellectu [141] lux et lux, ideo noctem ibi oportet esse. Et hinc Quilibet Christianus [142] et tota Ecclesia nox dicitur, vt ‘Nox Nocti indicat scientiam’.”

person becomes capable of and receptive to (*capax*) spiritual things, able to understand the invisible in Christ, the Scriptures, one's fellow human beings and in creation.<sup>692</sup> By faith he internally receives the intellectual light (*lux intellectus*) with which he can understand the external beauty of the world as referring to God.<sup>693</sup> Thus in these short remarks of Luther regarding the light of faith as the light of the intellect we can as well discern elements from all three approaches analysed in the previous chapter. The intellect of faith is defined in a very Augustinian manner as that which results from the illumination of the mind. This illumination is also connected to union, which is described in mystical terms, a union with the internal, eternal, incomprehensible Word who grants understanding of the external word. Furthermore, in order to receive the intellectual light of faith, the natural light of the mind is made darkness, an idea which bears traces of the Aristotelian emphasis on passivity.<sup>694</sup> In general, we can define the theological intellect as the capacity of understanding invisible things present in visible things, a capacity created by the infusion of the intellectual divine light of faith. In this sense in its general outline Luther's theory follows the Augustinian doctrine of illumination.

There remains, however, the more difficult question of how the noetics of the light function. What does it mean that the light is an intellectual light and a light of truth? Does the light, with regard to its being the light of understanding, impress on the intellect specific conceptual truths or principles? Or is the light, also as the light which illumines the intellect, incomprehensible and unanalysable until it becomes actualized in the process of intellection, such that only the result of the process can be described as conceptual and comprehensible? Even though Luther does not give very clear answers regarding the relationship of the intellect and the divine intellectual light, he does more closely describe the function of the theological intellect with regard to the objects of intellection. For Luther a fundamental opposition exists between the intellect (of faith) and the senses. Those who merely see or sense, do not understand the works of God.<sup>695</sup> Luther

<sup>692</sup> WA 55, I, 798 gloss 107.

<sup>693</sup> WA 55, II, 801, 51-64: "[51] Tercio Est Dominum ex operibus confiteri et honorare, i. e. sicut [52] 'magnificare' est eius opera magna estimare et agnoscere, Ita 'Confiteri' [53] est omnia opera eius confessionem eius intelligere et videre et decorem. [54] Sed hic opus est luce intellectus et quod primo ipsum Dominus confessione [55] et decore ornauerit intus, quam ab eo possit decorari et confiteri [56] foris. [[Maxime sanctos et Ecclesiam eius, in quibus lucet confessio et [57] decor eius.]] Omnia enim opera Dei sunt Confessio Dei, laudantia, [58] ostendentia, confitentia Deum. Similiter omnia sunt decor eius, quia eum [59] decorum et pulcherrimum ostendunt. Sed hoc non videt in rebus et creaturis, [60] nisi qui ipse intus decorem et confessionem habeat a spiritu. Non autem [61] habet, nisi prius negationem sui et humilitatem feditatis sue habeat. [62] Vnde qui se aliquid esse putant, Multam feditatem putant in rebus esse et [63] Deum neque esse neque decorum esse. Quia ipsi nondum fedi et negati [64] sibi sunt, Omnia enim sunt pulcherrima et recte Deum confitentia."

<sup>694</sup> On nature as light and faith as darkness see also chapters 2.4.1.1, 2.4.2.2 and 3.4.3.

<sup>695</sup> WA 55, I, 348 gloss 2: "GLOSSA: <sup>2)</sup> [1] 'Beatus qui intelligit' etc. est idem sensus, quem Dominus exprimit [2] Matt. xi.: 'Beatus, qui non fuerit schandalisatus in me', quia talis solum [3] videt secundum carnem, Non autem 'intelligit' super istum 'pauperem', [4] i. e. non plus sentit de eo quam, quod videt, scil. esse purum hominem. [5] Et sic Iudei pro maxima parte sunt Schandalisati, Quia non 'intellexerunt', [6] Sed solum senserunt, i. e. non rationales Sed sensitiui homines [7] fuerunt."

WA 55, II, 157, 12-17: "[12] 27, 5 Recte ergo dicit: **Non Intellexerunt**, Quia 'Intelligere', i. e. spiritualiter [13] intueri, necesse est opera ista, alioquin nunquid non viderunt [14] opera Domini? vtique, immo senserunt et cognouerunt. Sed non sicut [15] Apostoli, de quibus 'Annunciauere opera Dei et facta eius intellexerunt', [16] i. e. intelligentiam habuerunt, quod essent opera intelligibilia, i. e. [17] fidelia seu spiritualia per fidem. 'Celi enim annunciant opera manuum Dei.'"

accordingly emphasizes that the information given by the intellect of faith is never sensual or deduced from the senses, but is purely intellectual. It is given as a divine revelation in the form of spiritual, internal intuition in the light of faith, in which the invisible things that are its proper objects are seen.<sup>696</sup> Gloss 17 to Ps. 72 in the *Dictata* is perhaps the place in which the nature of the knowledge received in faith is most clearly defined in relation to sense cognition:

**I considered** thought and meditated **so that I would understand** this difference and reason [*ratio*] of good and evil: **this** namely to understand **work** of considerable difficulty **is before me** according to the eye that only sees, were I not changed into another from myself<sup>17</sup> **Until I entered** from considering the external sensible things **the Sanctuary** where God dwells in the spirit, into the contemplation of God in the heart: **and so I understood** had intellection, not only sensation of **their last things** the final things i.e., spiritual things.<sup>697</sup>

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WA 55, I, 386, 7-11: “[48, 21] **Homo** quilibet tantum ‘secundum hominem’ viuit **cum in honore** vero et eterno **esset** esse posset **non intellexit**<sup>23</sup> quia solum sentit, i. e. sensibilia attendit verbum abso[lutum] : Et ideo **comparatus est iumentis insipientibus** ignorantibus diuina et spiritualia. **et similis factus est illis** Stultus, sapiens tantum carnalia.”

WA 55, II, 222, 57 – 223, 66: “[57] BI 51v 40, 7 **Et si ingrediebatur, Vt Videret**. Hoc ‘Ingrediebatur’ ad carnem [58] intelligitur. Similiter ‘Vt videret’ i. e. obseruaret. Non ait: vt disceret, seque [59] 3, 232 | retur, laudaret, neque vt intelligeret. Sed tantummodo, vt secundum [60] carnem videret Christum, hominem eum solum credens ac querens Inuenire [61] quid, quod reprehenderet, accusaret. Et vniuersis peruersis et suspicios [62] idem est hoc ingenium, Ingredi scil., vt videant et obseruent. [63] Quare autem ‘videant’? Quia non ‘intelligunt’ i. e. non cogitant de proximo [64] secundum spiritum et animam, Nec quid sit aut fieri potest intus coram [65] Deo (hoc enim non videri Sed intelligi tantum potest fide pia), Sed tantum [66] vident foris, quid sit secundum carnem.”

WA 55, II, 341, 97-110: “[94] 63, 10 **Et annuntiabunt opus Dei et opus eius intelligent**, i. e. opus redemptionis [95] per Christum factę [et totius vitę Christi], et intelligent, quoniam [96] opus Dei est Iudicium et veritas et equitas, Non autem vmbra et vanitas, [97] vt Psal. infra 110. et Supra 27. Quia Iudei carnales Expectant a [98] Domino solum opera visibilia et vmbratilis huius vitę salutaria. Sed opera [99] Dei sunt Spiritualia et eterne vitę operatiua. Ideo non possunt ab illis intelligi, [100] Sed ab Apostolis et fidelibus. Ideo enim opera eius dicuntur veritas. [101] Opera enim Dei sunt intelligibilia i. e. solum intellectu [102] et [i. e.] fide perceptibilia in spe, non in re. Nam Qui [103] sensum tantummodo sequitur, in cruce Christi et in Ecclesię [104] suę directione necessario Schandalisatur, cum non [105] nisi penas et priuationes huius vitę in ea videat. Et ita [106] fit ei crux Christi schandalum. Quare intellectu opus est, ne stultitia [107] 3, 368 nobis sit sapientia Dei. Similiter et opera | Dei in malis viuentibus positie [108] in hac vita solum sunt intellectualia, Quia secundum spiritum sunt [109] damnati coram Deo, quibus concedit vitam secundum carnem. Et ita [110] opera Domini sunt veritas pro sanctis et Iudicium pro impiis.”

WA 55, II, 875, 49-53: “[49] ‘Mare Vedit’, i. e. sensu tantum carnis aduertit Christum et verbum eius, [50] Sed non intellexit nec intelligere voluit, ideo cecidit. Nam tam Iudei quam [51] gentes, quia non predicabantur sensibilia, Sed Inuisibilia, factum est eis [52] verbum crucis scandalum et stultitia et fugerunt atque conuersi sunt [53] retrorsum.”

See also WA 55, I, 290 gloss 1; 386, 5-10; 632 gloss 7; 704, 21 – 706, 1; WA 55, II, 157, 12-17; 179, 79 – 180, 107; 220, 2 – 221, 16; WA 56, 20-28.

<sup>696</sup> WA 55, I, 520 gloss 17; 780 gloss 52; WA 55, II, 157, 12-17; 481, 481-488; 524, 506 – 525, 524; 649, 136 – 148; 718, 11-15; 734, 109-113; 825, 723-729; 916, 751-761; 937, 1316-1323; WA 56, 20-28.

<sup>697</sup> WA 55, I, 520, 1-8: “**Existimabam** cogitabam et meditabar **ut cognoscerem** istam diuersitatem et rationem bonorum et malorum : **hoc** scil. cognoscere **labor** difficile **est ante me** secundum oculum tantum videntem, nisi fiam alius a me<sup>17</sup>. [72, 17] **Donec intrem** a sensibilibus considerandis, que sunt foris **in sanctuarium dei**<sup>18</sup> vbi Deus habitat in spiritum in conspectum Dei in corde : **et sic intelligam** intellectionem habeam, non tantum sensationem **in nouissimis eorum** vltimis i. e. spiritualibus.”

Gloss 17: That is, by the means of visible things and the senses I could not understand why there is this difference, but by intellect and faith. For faith, which is not sensual cognition and does not proceed from the senses, but is purely intellectual and from above, itself teaches how such good things are evil to them, and the evil of the righteous is good for them. Thence follows: 'Truly work is before me', but not before God. Therefore come before God and you will see. He who sees spiritual things is before God. He who only looks at visible things is before himself.<sup>698</sup>

In this text the Psalmist ponders the reason why those who are evil seem to prosper while the righteous suffer. Luther's answer is that this difference cannot be understood by means of visible things and the senses, "by the eye that only sees". Understanding only results when one by faith turns inward, is changed to another from oneself (i.e., becomes new man) and enters the Sanctuary (i.e., spirit) so that he is before God (*ante Deum*). There, faith given as an intellectual cognition from above teaches how visible good things are bad for those who are evil, and visible bad things good for the righteous. The one who stands in spirit in the view of God (*conspectum Dei*) sees the spiritual things, which refer in this passage especially the final ends of things. When a person sees the ends of things by faith, he is capable of understanding the reasons (*ratio*) behind the Psalmist's puzzlement. The knowledge of those things is purely intellectual; it is not based on anything perceived by the senses, but on direct and immediate revelation, i.e., the light of faith, which shows these things. This idea of faith seeing the final ends seems to have a connection to the four causes scheme, which Luther also uses in other works. Luther emphasizes that reason and philosophy can find material and sometimes formal causes, but the efficient cause and the final cause of things are understood only by faith, as they cannot be abstracted from sense perception.<sup>699</sup>

We can see, therefore, that according to Luther the light of faith works by 'superimposing' the intellectual knowledge upon that which is perceived, in the sense that there is *no internal relation in the cognitive process* between the sensible things that are understood, and the end result of the act of understanding. The *ratios* (i.e., the criteria, reasons or ends under which the sensual data is 'seen' in the mind and understood) come directly from divine revelation in the light of faith. Nevertheless, the end result of understanding is not separate from the reality of the object that is understood, but rather there is an *external ontological or metaphysical link* between them. That metaphysical link is God (i.e., Christ or the Word) as the 'reality' which already contains the final ends (*novissimis*) and the true content of things. Thus Luther can state that the sign (i.e., the visible thing) is understood at that point when the reality itself is seen (i.e., by the light of

<sup>698</sup> WA 55, I, 520 gloss 17: "GLOSSA:17) q. d. secundum visibilia et sensum non possum cognoscere, quare sit ista differentia, Sed per Intellectum et fidem, fides enim, que est Non sensitiva nec ex sensitiva procedens cognitio, Sed desursum solum intellectualis, Ipsa docet, Quia Bona talia sunt eis mala Et mala Iustorum sunt eis Bona, vnde sequitur 'Veruntamen Labor ante me', Sed non ante Deum. Veni ergo ante Deum et videbis. Est autem ante Deum, qui Spiritualia videt. Est ante se, qui visibilia tantum respicit."

<sup>699</sup> The idea is reflected in Luthers famous *De homine* disputation, on which see Ebeling 1982, 333-431, who offers also a comprehensive review of the Scholastic background of the causes and a textual overview. See also Lohse 1958, 63-65; 75-76. Interestingly also Bonaventure seems to connect faith especially to understanding the origin and the end of the world, see *Itinerarium* I, 12.



faith).<sup>700</sup> But over against the Aristotelian and Thomistic understanding of the action of the intellect, in which the forms are transmitted to the soul via sense perception, and the light of the intellect abstracts the intelligible forms from the sensible forms, Luther's understanding of the work of the theological intellect holds that the intelligible content is not present and mediated via sense perception, but rather is added directly by the light of faith. And this clarifies the matter of why the intellect must be empty of its natural light: its natural opinion or reasoning (*sensus*) based on sense perception. Furthermore, for Luther the link between the object and the end result as well as the guarantee of truth lies not in the process of abstraction, but is guaranteed by the ontological connection between the object and the light of understanding (i.e., God). In this sense Luther's theory follows the internal logic of Augustine's and Bonaventure's doctrine of illumination, in which the divine illumination functions as a guarantee of truth and certitude. The fact that Luther attributes divine illumination only to the theological intellect, unlike Augustine and Bonaventure, explains why for Luther the natural reason is so weak and prone to err in its discernment. Furthermore, Luther's connection to the Augustinian rather than the Thomist interpretation of illumination clarifies why for Luther the theological intellect is not properly speaking a capacity (i.e., an inherent ability residing in the soul), but act or actuality. For Luther, without actual illumination by the light of faith there exists no understanding.

Finally, now that we have examined the ontological and noetic nature of the intellect of faith, it is time to examine the concrete understanding it provides with regard to the objects that are understood by it. As we have mentioned above, for Luther the primary object of the theological intellect is Christ. Faith, as the theological intellect, shows Christ's divinity hidden under his humanity. This hiddenness itself follows Luther's idea of God hiding under contraries.<sup>701</sup> Therefore, the invisible divine good that is present in Christ cannot be discerned by the natural cognitive means of the fallen person, but only by the intellect of faith. This is the primary function of the intellect of faith with regard to external objects of understanding. Luther defines the intellect of faith in its function with regard to Christ in the *Dictata super Psalterium*, explaining the meaning of the title of Psalm 31, "Education that makes to understand" (*Eruditio intellectificatum*)<sup>702</sup> as:

which others have translated as 'intellect', i.e., this is a Psalm which teaches to understand, which inspired by David made even him understand or be intelligent. This act of making to understand, however, does not happen according to human wisdom, but only according to the spirit and sense of Christ, about which the Apostle in 1. Cor. 2 beautifully argues that only those who are spiritual and those who believe have this intellect. In short, it is nothing else than to understand the heavenly, eternal, spiritual and invisible, which takes place by faith alone; namely those things, which 'no eye has seen nor ear heard, those which have not risen up in the heart of man'; those which no philosopher and no man, 'no prince of this present time has known'. For this is 'wisdom hidden in mystery' and concealed under the cover of faith. Ps. 50: 'Your obscure and secret wisdom you have made manifest to

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<sup>700</sup> WA 55, I, 468 gloss 7; 546 glosses 5-6; WA 55, II, 342, 126 – 343, 157; 449, 14-22; 453, 137-155. See also chapters 2.2.3 and 2.3. Also Schwarz 1962, 136 notes that the contents of the theological intellect are not arrived to by abstraction, but they are given in faith.

<sup>701</sup> See chapter 2.2.4.3.

<sup>702</sup> WA 55, I, 290, 4: "Tit. [31, 1] David Eruditio intellectificatum.<sup>1</sup>"

me'. Therefore to know that the Son of God has become man for the sake of our salvation, and that all who are outside of him are in sin, this is that 'Education' [*eruditio*], that 'Intellect', which no one knows except by the Holy Spirit. Therefore he begins by saying: 'Blessed are those whose transgressions have been forgiven'. The aim of the prophet, taught by his own experience, to instruct all in general in the true knowledge by which all are justified and by which their sins are forgiven.<sup>703</sup>

Here already we can observe the two aspects of the theological intellect in relation to Christ. Again, Luther mentions the heavenly, eternal, spiritual and invisible things which are accessed by the theological intellect. On the other hand, this knowledge is very concretely connected to the Incarnation of Christ. Faith as the theological intellect reveals that Christ the Crucified, the suffering human being, is God. Luther is absolutely adamant that this knowledge cannot be had without internal divine revelation. Those who view Christ only "according to the flesh" see nothing but a human being who suffered a shameful death, and are necessarily scandalized by him. But faith reveals the divinity of Christ as well as the fallen sinful status of humanity and the nature of Christ's propitiatory death, so that it grants forgiveness of sins and makes righteous the person who believes in Christ. In this sense, the functions of faith as an agent of understanding and an agent of justification belong together.<sup>704</sup>

<sup>703</sup> WA 55, I, 290 gloss 1: "GLOSSA:<sup>1)</sup> [1]vnde alii habent 'Intellectus', i. e. est Psal[mus] docens intelligere, [2]qui Dauid inspiratus eum quoque fecit intelligere vel esse intelligentem. [3]Ista autem intellectificatio non est secundum humanam sapientiam, [4]Sed secundum spiritum et sensum Christi, de quo apostolus 1. Corin. 2. [5]pulchre disputat, quoniam solum spirituales et credentes hunc intellectum [6]habent. Et breuiter est: non nisi cēlestia, ēterna et spiritualia et Inuisibilia [7]intelligere, quod fit per solam fidem, scil. ea, 'que oculus non vidit, [8]nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascenderunt', que nullus philosophus [9]et nullus hominum, 'nullus principum huius sēculi cognovit'. [10]Quia hec est 'sapientia abscondita in mysterio' et in velamento fidei [11]occulta. Psal. L. 'Incerta et occulta sapientie tue manifestasti mihi'. [12]Scire ergo filium Dei esse incarnatum pro salute nostra et extra eum [13]omnes esse in peccatis, hec est 'eruditio' ista, 'Intellectus' iste, quod nemo [14]nisi per spiritum sanctum cognouit. Ideo incipit dicens: 'Beati, quorum [15]remissę sunt iniquitates.' Mens prophete est, [quod] Ex suo casu [doctus] [16]omnes generaliter erudire ad cognitionem veram, quomodo quis Iustificetur [17]et quomodo peccatum remittatur."

<sup>704</sup> WA 55, I, 346 gloss 2: "GLOSSA: <sup>2)</sup> [1]'Beatus qui intelligit' etc. est idem sensus, quem Dominus exprimit [2]Matt. xi.: 'Beatus, qui non fuerit schandalisatus in me', quia talis solum [3]videt secundum carnem, Non autem 'intelligit' super istum 'pauperem', [4]i. e. non plus sentit de eo quam, quod videt, scil. esse purum hominem. [5]Et sic Iudei pro maxima parte sunt Schandalisati, Quia non 'intellexerunt', [6]Sed solum senserunt, i. e. non rationales Sed sensitiui homines [7]fuerunt."

WA 55, II, 222, 57 – 224, 66: "[57] Bl 51v 40, 7 **Et si ingrediebatur, Vt Videret.** Hoc 'Ingredebatur' ad carnem [58] intelligitur. Similiter 'Vt videret' i. e. obseruaret. Non ait: vt disceret, seque [59] 3, 232 | retur, laudaret, neque vt intelligeret. Sed tantummodo, vt secundum [60] carnem videret Christum, hominem eum solum credens ac querens Inuenire [61] quid, quod reprehenderet, accusaret. Et vniuersis peruersis et suspiciosus [62] idem est hoc ingenium, Ingredi scil., vt videant et obseruent. [63] Quare autem 'videant'? Quia non 'intelligunt' i. e. non cogitant de proximo [64] secundum spiritum et animam, Nec quid sit aut fieri potest intus coram [65] Deo (hoc enim non videri Sed intelligi tantum potest fide pia), Sed tantum [66] vident foris, quid sit secundum carnem."

WA 55, II, 341, 94 – 342, 107: "[94] 63, 10 **Et annuntiabunt opus Dei et opus eius intelligent,** i. e. opus redemptionis [95] per Christum factę [et totius vitę Christi], et intelligent, quoniam [96] opus Dei est Iudicium et veritas et ēquitas, Non autem vmbra et vanitas, [97] vt Psal. infra 110. et Supra 27. Quia Iudei carnales Expectant a [98] Domino solum opera visibilia et vmbrae huius vitę salutaria. Sed opera [99] Dei sunt Spiritualia et ēternę vitę operatiua. Ideo non possunt ab illis intelligi, [100] Sed ab Apostolis et fidelibus. Ideo enim opera eius dicuntur veritas. [101] Opera enim Dei sunt intelligibilia i. e. solum intellectu [102] et [i. e.] fide perceptibilia in spe, non in re. Nam Qui [103] sensum tantummodo sequitur, in cruce

However, as mentioned above, for Luther Christ is also the door to all other knowledge concerning spiritual and invisible things. Among these Luther counts the recognition that Christ dwells in the poor and despised. However, from the wording of the text it is not completely clear whether Luther means all poor and despised in general, the Christians who are poor and despised by the world, or perhaps even primarily Christ.<sup>705</sup> This presence and action of God in the weak and despised nevertheless in general manifests the nature of the wisdom of God, which is hidden under contraries and not perceptible by natural wisdom, but only by the intellect of faith.<sup>706</sup>

The recognition and knowledge of Christ in faith is also the key to understanding the Scripture, as for Luther Christ is “the Sun and Truth in Scripture”.<sup>707</sup> He is the fulfilment of the Old Testament both in an historical and in a spiritual sense. The intellect of faith allows the Christian to understand the Old Testament as referring to the New, and to grasp its inner content or nucleus. Luther also refers to this true content as the “spiritual

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Christi et in Ecclesię [104] suę directione necessario Schandalisatur, cum non [105] nisi penas et priuationes huius vitę in ea videat. Et ita [106] fit ei crux Christi schandalum. Quare intellectu opus est, ne stultitia [107] 3, 368 nobis sit sapientia Dei.”

WA 55, II, 734, 109-116: “[109] 93, 8 **Intelligite insipientes in populo; et stulti aliquando sapite.** [110] Quia Deus in humanitate apparuit, non potuit ex sensibus nisi homo percipi; [111] ideo intellectu opus est, quem dat fides. Isaie 7.: ‘Nisi credideritis, [112] non permanebitis.’ Caro et sanguis nunquam possent reuelare hunc hominem [113] B1 185 v esse Deum verum, nisi spiritus prius reuelaret et\* spiritui crederetur. [114] Non enim sufficit reuelari et audire Christum esse Deum, nisi quis [115] consentiat auditis et reuelatis; alioquin quis non audiuit? Si ergo intellectus [116] 93, 9 habetur, facile persuadetur”

WA 56, 237, 20-28: “[19] **Non est Intelligens [3, 11].** [20] Quia Sapientia Dei in abscondito est, incognita mundo. ‘Verbum enim [21] caro factum est’ et Sapientia incarnata ac per hoc abscondita nec nisi [22] intellectu attingibilis, Sicut Christus non nisi reuelatione cognoscibilis. [23] Quare qui de visibilibus et in visibilibus sapientes sunt (quales sunt omnes [24] homines extra fidem et qui Deum ignorant ac futuram vitam), non intelligunt, [25] non sapiunt, i. e. non sunt intelligentes, non sapientes, Sed insipientes [26] et cęci, Et licet videantur sibi sapientes, tamen stulti facti sunt. [27] Quia non sapientia, que in occultis est, Sed quę humanitus reperiri potuit, [28] sapientes sunt.”

See also WA 55, II, 531, 686 – 532, 709; 649, 136-148; AWA 2, 106, 17 – 108, 14; 179, 15 – 180, 12.

<sup>705</sup> WA 55, II, 220, 2 – 221, 20: “[2] 40, 2 **Beatus Qui intelligit.** Sepe dictum est, Quod ‘intelligere’ in [3] Scrip[turis non dicatur de iis, qui tantum visibilia et sensibilia cogitant, [4] quia in hoc Brutis comparatur homo [[quomodo in philosophia capitur, [5] Sed respectu Inuisibilium]], Sed qui spiritualia et Inuisibilia cogitant, [6] quod non nisi per fidem fieri potest in hac vita. Vnde Ro. 1.: ‘Inuisibilia Dei [7] a creatione mundi operibus intellecta conspiciuntur.’ ‘Conspiciuntur Inuisibilia’, [8] inquit, non visa, Sed ‘intellecta’, et hoc ‘ex operibus a creatione [9] mundi’. Sic Ergo Intelligere super Christo est habere cognitionem [10] de inuisibilibus in illo, que in alio homine non sunt. Et [11] ‘Beatus’ omnis ille. Alias ‘omnes schandalisantur’ in illo. [[Vnde Psal. 31.: [12] ‘Nolite [fieri] sicut equus et mulus, quibus non est intellectus.’]] Sic [13] certe vsque hodie Rari, qui intelligunt super Christum habitantem in pauperibus [14] et despectis. Quia enim non videtur Christus in illis sensibiliter, [15] non intelligunt neque consyderant eum inhabitare spiritualiter. Et sic [16] vsque hodie Schandalisantur. Similes ergo tales sunt Iudęis. Quare semper [17] 3, 231 | ‘Inuicem’ meliora presumere de ‘Inuicem’ debemus secundum Apostolum, [18] ‘honore preuenire’ et superiores arbitrari. O quam sepe loquitur [19] Christus de contemptibili corde et persona, Et non aduertitur. Loquitur [20] autem magnus et diues, et omnes mirantur.”

See also WA 55, II, 222, 57 – 223, 66.

<sup>706</sup> See chapter 2.2.4.3.

<sup>707</sup> WA 55, II, 604, 2-7: “[2] 81, 5 **Nescierunt neque intellexerunt**, i. e. Noluerunt Scire ipsum esse [3] Christum, Dominum glorię, Et ideo ‘neque intellexerunt’. Quia habere intellectum [4] spiritualium non nisi ex Scientia seu notitia Christi habetur. [5] Nescito enim Christo impossibile est habere intellectum in Scrip[tura, [6] Cum ipse sit sol et veritas in Scrip[tura. Ergo ‘nescire’ refertur ad Christum, [7] ‘Non Intelligere’ ad veritatem fidei.”

See also WA 55, I, 780 gloss 52; WA 55, II, 994, 2970-2987.

understanding”, the spirit hidden by the letter, especially with regard to the Psalms.<sup>708</sup> Furthermore, the intellect of faith opens up the New Testament as well, as even there its spiritual content is hidden under evils and passions.<sup>709</sup> Only by illumination and the intellect of faith can the symbolic teachings and precepts of God be understood.<sup>710</sup> Sometimes Luther even defines the intellect (in the proper sense) as the ability to recognize the allegories appearing in the Scriptures and creatures.<sup>711</sup> While referring to the spiritual sense of the word, Luther can say that the word of the New and Old Law is the same. That is, the “abbreviated word” (*verbum abbreviatum*) or the spiritual content understood by the intellect of faith is the same in both of them.<sup>712</sup> Sometimes Luther also refers to this process of understanding as “spiritual hearing” or “hearing in the spirit”. Only the one who participates in the spiritual by faith can understand the spiritual meaning, which the scribe of the Holy Scripture intended.<sup>713</sup> One might presume that the intellect of faith has an analogous function with regard to understanding the sacraments as it has with regard to the Scripture, but Luther does not discuss this aspect in connection with the Eucharist and Baptism explicitly.<sup>714</sup> However, the idea that faith is required for sharing in the sufferings of Christ and for being incorporated with him, comes up in the *Operationes in Psalmos* in connection with the words of John 6:61 on eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ. This idea can also be interpreted sacramentally, though the focus of the text seems to be on understanding them as a metaphor of the sufferings of Christ and the sufferings to which Christ leads the believer.<sup>715</sup> Nevertheless, Luther’s statement, that God first appears and is sensed as being contrary to that which is later grasped by faith, seem to be applicable to Christ, the external and internal Word, sacraments and sufferings alike.<sup>716</sup>

<sup>708</sup> WA 55, I, 772, 19 – 774, 2; 773-774 glosses 25-26; 796, 18 – 798, 7; WA 55, II, 493, 112 – 494, 121; 903, 368-374; 916, 751 – 917, 769; WA 57, b195, 20 – b196, 19. See also chapter 2.3.2.

<sup>709</sup> WA 55, I, 796-797 gloss 107, 7-9.

<sup>710</sup> WA 57, b30, 3-16; b30 gloss 1; b185, 9 – b186, 12.

<sup>711</sup> WA 55, II, 937, 1319-1331: “[1319] Intellectus proprie est Allegorias in Scrip[turis et creaturis agnoscere, [1320] et vltra id, quod videtur oculis aut sensu percipitur, etiam intus intellectu [1321] aliud percipere; quod est vtilissimum donum contra Iudeorum, [1322] hereticorum insidias, qui Scrip[turas et creaturas false adducunt et seducunt [1323] simplices, qui non interiora penetrare possunt. [1324] Consilii et fortitudinis [donum] satis supra dictum. Scientia autem [1325] iam dicta est que sit. Et pietas atque timor supra latius oct[onario] [1326] 5. Vnde hic formulam ponimus [1327] Quod Vbi intellectus dari petitur in hoc psal[mo] vel al[io], debet intelligi [1328] Spiritualis intelligentia vel allegoria alicuius Scrip[turæ, que figuratiue [1329] ponitur vel poni videtur contra eos, qui eam figuraliter accipiunt vel allegant, [1330] sicut Psal. 31. contra Iudeos: ‘Nolite fieri sicut equus et mulus, quibus [1331] non est intellectus’, i. e. nolite carnaliter omnia intelligere.”

<sup>712</sup> WA 55, II, 431, 159-183; WA 56, 408, 1 – 409, 12.

<sup>713</sup> The metaphor of hearing, which may contain analogies to the theory of the spiritual senses, is employed especially in the *Operationes in Psalmos*, but the concept of the theological intellect likewise continues in that work to be employed as the necessary condition for understanding the Scriptures. Sometimes the terms seem to be synonymous. WA 55, II, 649, 136-137; WA 56, 228, 12-13; AWA 2, 35, 23-25; 55, 16; 60, 1; 233, 14-18; 323, 4-7; 389, 13-15; 561, 4-5; WA 5, 395, 27 – 396, 3.

<sup>714</sup> See, however, WA 57, b113, 21 – b114, 20 (where the term “sacrament” is used of the Passion of Christ), b169, 9 – b171, 8; b191, 19 – b192, 15; b205, 16 – b208, 4. In all these passages faith is presented as the condition for the right reception of the sacrament.

<sup>715</sup> See AWA 2, 179, 15 – 182, 18. However, at WA 57, b208, 22 – b209, 27 Luther interprets the sentence as referring to the spiritual eating of Christ through meditation on his sufferings.

<sup>716</sup> AWA 2, 181, 7-15. “Aliud agitur et aliud longe apparet: Occidere videtur, sed revera vivificat; percutit, sed vere potius sanat; confundit, sed vere tunc glorificat; deducit ad inferos, sed vere reducit potius ab inferis et similia, de quibus multa diximus in praecedentibus. Quid ergo mirabilius divina hac voluntate?

As we can infer from the previous discussion, the sufferings, tribulations and afflictions (i.e., *Anfechtungen*) are yet another object which the intellect of faith understands. Luther holds that the works of God always follow the rule that they inflict suffering on the flesh which only feels and sees the sensible, whereas the spirit by the intellect of faith grasps their real, salutary content. This is also true of God's judgment which meets the wicked: externally their life seems to prosper, but internally they are condemned by God.<sup>717</sup> Without instruction (*eruditio*) and intellect the nature of the works of God in suffering is impossible to comprehend.<sup>718</sup> Sinners without faith do not understand this rule and perish, but the faithful are saved through "night", i.e., adversities.<sup>719</sup> Luther also applies this principle to the Church. Its nature (*structura*) is invisible and internal, before God (*intus coram Deo*). The foolish and stupid do not understand this as they seek only external beauty; therefore they are offended and scandalized.<sup>720</sup> Luther emphasizes that tribulation teaches by experience how God works.

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Habitat quidem in altis, sed humilia respicit; stultos facit, ut sapientes fiant; infirmos facit, ut potentes reddat. Verum prius quidem apparet et sentitur, at posterius, nisi fidem habeas, non assequeris. Sic enim Petrus 1Pt 1 dicit in prophetis esse praenuntiatis priores passiones et posteriores glorias."

See also chapter 2.4.2.1

<sup>717</sup> WA 55, II, 341, 94 – 342, 121: "[94] 63, 10 Et **annunciabunt opus Dei et opus eius intelligent**, i. e. opus redemptionis [95] per Christum factę [et totius vitę Christi], et intelligent, quoniam [96] opus Dei est Iudicium et veritas et ęquitas, Non autem vmbra et vanitas, [97] vt Psal. infra 110. et Supra 27. Quia Iudei carnales Expectant a [98] Domino solum opera visibilia et vmbratilis huius vitę salutaria. Sed opera [99] Dei sunt Spiritualia et ęternę vitę operatiua. Ideo non possunt ab illis intelligi, [100] Sed ab Apostolis et fidelibus. Ideo enim opera eius dicuntur veritas. [101] Opera enim Dei sunt intelligibilia i. e. solum intellectu [102] et [i. e.] fide perceptibilia in spe, non in re. Nam Qui [103] sensum tantummodo sequitur, in cruce Christi et in Ecclesię [104] suę directione necessario Schandalisatur, cum non [105] nisi penas et priuationes huius vitę in ea videat. Et ita [106] fit ei crux Christi schandalum. Quare intellectu opus est, ne stultitia [107] 3, 368 nobis sit sapientia Dei. Similiter et opera [Dei in malis viuentibus positie] [108] in hac vita solum sunt intellecturalia, Quia secundum spiritum sunt [109] damnati coram Deo, quibus concedit vitam secundum carnem. Et ita [110] opera Domini sunt veritas pro sanctis et Iudicium pro impiis. [111] [[Immo pro vtrisque, Quia veritas [propter] spiritum saluatum, Iudicium [112] propter [carnem] contemptam et abie[ctam]. In Malis econtra [ver]itas [113] quia verum ... in spiritu et ... in carne.]] Vnde et [Econtra] hoc [114] ipsum nisi quis intelligat, Schandalisabitur, vt queritur [115] Psal. 36. et 72.: 'Mei autem pene moti sunt pedes.' Vnde ait: 'Existimabam [116] vt cognoscerem, hoc labor est ante me', scil. ex mea inuestigatione id non [117] apprehenderem, nisi per fidem mihi reuelaretur aliunde, scil. a Deo; ideo [118] sequitur: 'donec intrem', scil. per fidem a visibilibus vertendo oculum ad [119] Inuisibilia, 'in sanctuarium Dei', i. e. in mysterium et Ecclesiam et sanctum [120] non seculare Sed spirituale, 'Et sic intelligam', i. e. intelligens fiam, [121] 'in nouissimis eorum.'"

See also WA 55, I, 520, 1-8; glosses 17-18.

<sup>718</sup> WA 55, I, 362 gloss 10: "GLOSSA:<sup>10</sup> [1]Ab hoc versu potest simul intelligi sub eisdem verbis abiectio [2]Apostolorum secundum carnem Et Abiectio Iudeorum secundum spiritum; [3]pro vtroque igitur hic plorant Apostoli. primum sequitur August[inus], [4]quod et prophetauit Isaia 28.: 'Alienum est opus eius, vt operetur opus suum'. Quia perdit, vt saluet, damnat secundum carnem, vt glorificet [6]spiritum suum. Quid enim a saluatore magis alienum quam perdere? [7]Et tamen sic facit Christus suis. Et hoc est, quod nemo intelligit, nisi qui [8]'eruditionem filiorum Core' habet, i. e. spiritualium cognitionem. Vide [9]tot[um] c[apitulum] Isa[ie] pulcherrimum."

<sup>719</sup> WA 55, I, 630, 7 – 632, 1; 630-632 glosses 2-8.

<sup>720</sup> WA 55, II, 718, 11-17: "[11] 91, 7 Secundo Quia dicit, quod **Insipiens ipsa non cognoscet**. Quod exinde [12] fit, Quia opera et factura Christi Ecclesia non apparet aliquid esse foris, [13] Sed omnis structura eius est intus coram Deo Inuisibilis. Et ita non [14] oculis carnalibus, Sed spiritualibus in intellectu et fide cognoscuntur. Insipientes [15] autem eam contemnunt, Quia sapiunt tantummodo speciosa foris, [16] vt sequitur: Cum exorti fuerint, q. d. factura tua non apparet ita et floret, [17] sicut illi volunt florere. [Et ideo Schandalisantur et offenduntur in il[la].]"

Therefore it provides a deeper understanding of the Scripture.<sup>721</sup> Furthermore faith and sufferings also lead to self-understanding. Faith shows that all people are in sin, even if the senses and human opinions contradict this.<sup>722</sup> Participation in the divine truthfulness through faith causes the believer to concede that every human being is false and deceitful. Faith makes the believer partake of eternal spiritual goods, so that they understand the perishable nature of the temporal goods and the foolishness and misery of the old person that clung to them and are humiliated.<sup>723</sup> Through the light of faith, the believer can see

<sup>721</sup> WA 55, II, 56, 20 – 58, 1: “Est autem triplex dilatatio, quam Deus dat [20] in tribulatione: prima Eruditionis. Quia in tribulatione plurima discit, [21] que prius nesciebat, plurima per experientiam certius cognoscit, que [22] etiam speculatiue nouit. Et Scrip[turam sanctam melius intelligit quam [1] sine tentatione; vnde vocatur ‘disciplina Domini’. Et Psal[mus Confitetur: [2] ‘Et disciplina tua ipsa me docebit.’ Et Sap[liens: ‘Qui non est tentatus, [3] quid nouit?’ Igitur per tribulationem homo dilatat suas synthereses et [4] elicit conclusiones practicas miro modo. Et iterum Psal[mus: ‘A mandatis [5] tuis intellexi.’ Credo, Quod hanc eruditionem, quam lata sit, [6] soli intelligant experti. Opera enim et praxis exponunt et intelligunt [7] Scripturas, figuras et creaturas. Et hec latitudo appropriatur filio in [1] diuinis, cuius est sapientia et doctrina.”

<sup>722</sup> WA 56, 228, 12-22: “[12] Solutio autem Est: Quia Apostolus in spiritu loquitur, ideo non [13] intelligitur nisi ab iis, qui in spiritu sunt. Vnde Non valet solutio Lyrensis, [14] Quod peccatum per accidens valet ad commendationem Dei, quia neque [15] per se neque per accidens valet ad gloriam veritatis Dei, | maxime | Si [16] de veritate Dei intrinseca intelligatur siue verborum eius. Valet autem [17] per se et proprie ad commendationem veritatis Dei moraliter siue tropologice; [18] i. e. credulitas, qua Deo credimus nos esse in peccatis, licet noster [19] sensus id Vel nesciat vel non putet, ipsa est, que nos peccatores constituit [20] et Deo gloriam dat acceptando sermones gratiæ et veritatis tanquam sibi [21] necessarios. Quis enim gratiam excipiat et Iustitiam, nisi qui se peccatum [22] habere fateatur?”

<sup>723</sup> WA 55, II, 880, 19-25: “[19] 115, 11 **Ego dixi in excessu meo: omnis homo mendax.** Quamdiu et ego [20] homo sum et fui, non vidi, quod esset omnis homo mendax. Nunc quia credidi [21] et in excessu sum et spiritualis homo factus per fidem, omnes Iudicans, [22] a nemine Iudicatus, Video quod qui non est in eodem excessu et non [23] credit, est mendax. Et hoc locutus sum et predicaui; ideo humiliant et [24] affligunt. Nolunt audire, quod sint stulti, vani, mendaces, mali etc., Sed se [25] Iustos et sapientes et veraces putant et putari volunt.”

WA 55, II, 887, 230 – 888, 261: “[230] **Ego autem humiliatus sum nimis.** Hic totam literam et sapientiam [231] carnis destruit et deiicit, Quia per fidem eruditur, quod omnis gloria [232] carnis sit flos feni. Fides enim facit temporalia comparari cum æternis et [233] carnalia cum spiritualibus. Tunc videt, quanta sit miseria spiritualibus [234] carere et temporalibus abundare. Ideo dicit: Ex fide nunc intelligo, quod [235] vehementer nihil fui et miser, cum extra fidem in me fuerim, Etiam si rex, [236] BI 234 v diues, potens sim etc. \*Hoc autem non dicit, qui carnem sapit, Sed omnino [237] contraria. Quia non habet fidem, non credidit, Sed presentia possedit; [238] 4, 273 ideo in illis quiescit | et tacet et exaltatum se nimis existimat, non [239] loquitur, non querit alia ab illis, Sed habet pacem in substantia sua. Non [240] est clamor in plateis eorum. Et hinc elucet quarto, quare dixit ‘locutus [241] sum, quia credidi’, Scil. Inuocando, orando, clamando ad Dominum pro [242] iis, quæ fide percepit. [I]ll[Qu]i enim habet, quod [vo]luit, tacet, [vt] videtur [243] Apostolus 2. Cor. [4.] Exponere et [acci]pere, quia de futu[r]is non tacemus, [244] quia [ea] no[n]dum habemus ... rum aliud nisi ... n de illis pos[sumus] cum [245] opus nostrum ... illis sit futurum ... maximum quod possumus ... re de [246] illis Est ... m.]] Sentit enim ea absentia, que credit; ideo fit inquietus, [247] donec ea apprehendat, et loquitur in corde suo sine intermissione magno [248] desiderio ad Deum. Et ita videt se humiliatum nimis, quia longe abesse [249] illis. Quanto enim maiora sunt que credimus, tanto profundius miseri [250] sumus, quod ea nondum habemus. Sunt autem maxima, ideo humiliati [251] nimis sumus. Et quoniam carnales contraria sapiunt et errant, ideo dicit: [252] 115, 11 **Ego dixi in excessu meo: omnis homo mendax.** Iste est excessus, [253] quo per fidem leuatur super se, vt videat futura bona. Alioquin et ipse [254] erat homo mendax, Sed in excessu factus mendacium excessit et verax factus [255] est per fidem. Et ideo eos, qui vanitatem diligere conspexit et fidem [256] posthabere, mendaces esse vidit, Quia reputant ea bona sua, que non [257] sunt. Et cum humiliati sint nimis, exaltati sibi videntur. Et ideo mirum [258] est, quomodo simul dicat humiliatum se et in excessu esse, Scil. quia agnoscit [259] se humiliatum et miserum per excessum. Illi autem non sunt humiliati [260] (i. e. non agnoscunt), quia nondum sunt in excessu, Sed in volucro [261] mendacii.”

himself as sinful and evil and God as good, attribute to God glory, praise and confession, and hate and judge the evil that is in himself.<sup>724</sup>

Finally, by the means of the intellect of faith even the entire creation is understood as a work of God. By faith God is perceptible even in sensible things. As the Church has been created with the word of the Gospel, so also in the beginning the whole world has been created with the word of Wisdom. By faith all things can in some sense be read as pointing to the Incarnation of Christ, the virtues and vices, the future glory and misery. All created things exist for the assistance of the intellect and affect, and their activity (*negotium*) is a prelude of the spiritual. A soul which has been made capable, sees by the light of faith the wisdom of God in which visible things have been created, and which they reflect in this spectacle of the world going towards its eschatological realization in the New Creation.<sup>725</sup> All of them are transitory signs pointing to that which is permanent: Christ. Christ is their center, meaning and their invisible content grasped by the intellect of faith.<sup>726</sup> All the works of God are beautiful, praise God and point to him, but this reality is only seen with the intellectual light that must first be received internally.<sup>727</sup> Therefore,

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See also WA 55, I, 756, 3-9; 756 gloss 3; WA 56, 229, 7 – 230, 8; WA 57, b213, 22 – b215, 14; AWA 2, 131, 22 – 132, 16; 305, 16 – 306, 7.

<sup>724</sup> WA 55, II, 748, 19-28: “[19] **Confessio et pulchritudo** etc. Duo sunt in homine, Spiritus et caro. [20] Ad spiritum pertinet primus versus locus, Alter ad carnem. Quia In Conspectu [21] Dei esse proprię secundum animam convenit Ecclesię et non secundum [22] corpus. In Anima autem est intelligentia et voluntas, ista per confessionem, [23] hęc per pulchritudinem ornatur; ista per lucem, hęc per colorem; [24] ista per fidem, hęc per amorem; ista per intellectum, hęc per affectum. Ergo [25] Confessio est ipsa lux mentis, Qua cognoscimus nos, quid simus in [26] nobis et quid Deus in nobis, Quid ex nobis, quid ex Deo habemus. Agnitio [27] autem ista vtriusque rei Est ipsa vera duplex confessio, scil. miserię nostrę [28] et misericordię Dei, peccati nostri et gratię Dei, malitię nostrę et bonitatis [29] Dei. Et iste est totus ornatus intellectus, rationis, speculatiue virtutis; [30] per hanc enim fit, vt homo non possit negare Deo que Dei sunt, nec [31] potest sibi attribuere que sua non sunt. Ideo propriissime dicitur ‘confessio’, [32] Quia confitetur et tribuit vnique quod suum est. Sed ‘pulchritudo’ [33] Est bona voluntas, totus ornatus practice virtutis, vis appetitiue, [34] Quo amat in se que Dei sunt et odit que sua sunt, Sicut confessio prior [35] ostenderat. Sed hęc omnia non nisi in conspectu Dei sunt, ibi enim ad hoc [36] illuminatur. Et idem habet translatio heb[raica] ‘Gloria et decor ante vultum [37] eius’, i. e. clara cognitio laudis Dei et ignomię suę et bona voluntas [38] odiens sua et diligens ea que sunt Dei.”

<sup>725</sup> WA 55, II, 511, 138 – 512, 165; 824, 698-708; 825, 723-729.

<sup>726</sup> WA 55, II, 342, 126 – 343, 144: “[126] Quarto sic, Quia omnia opera Creationis et veteris legis signa sunt [127] operum Dei, quę in Christo et suis sanctis facit et faciet, et ideo in Christo [128] illa preterita tanquam signa omnia implentur. Nam omnia illa sunt transitoria, [129] significantia ea, que sunt ęterna et permanentia. Et hec sunt opera [130] veritatis, illa autem omnia vmbra et opera figurationis. Ideo Christus finis [131] omnium et centrum, in quem omnia respiciunt et monstrant, ac si dicerent: [132] Ecce iste est, qui est, nos autem non sumus, Sed significamus tantum. [133] Vnde Iudei arguuntur Psal. 27. quod non intellexerunt opera et in [134] opera, i. e. opera in veteri lege non intellectualiter aspiciabant, Sed tantum [135] carnaliter, non vt signa et argumenta rerum, Sed res ipsas. Quia [136] quod intelligitur, Inuisibile est ab eo, quod videtur, aliud longe. Vnde [137] Apostoli Annunciauerunt opera Dei (scil. in Christo facta) et exinde Intellexerunt [138] facta eius, i. e. res preteritas in gestis et creationis, scil. intelligentes, [139] quoniam ista opera Christi in illis olim sint figurata et significata. [140] Quia tunc perfecte intelligitur signum, quando res ipsa signi videtur. [141] Vnde et nos omnes modo in Ecclesia Intelligimus, i. e. intellectualiter et [142] spiritualiter accipimus, facta Dei, olim scil. in lege et natura facta, Iudei [143] autem eadem facta non intelligunt, Sed sentiunt tantum vsque in hodiernum [144] diem.”

See also WA 55, I, 468 gloss 7; 546 gloss 6; WA 55, II, 535, 33 – 536, 40 and chapters 2.2.3 and 2.3.

<sup>727</sup> WA 55, II, 801, 51-64: “[51] Tercio Est Dominum ex operibus confiteri et honorare, i. e. sicut [52] ‘magnificare’ est eius opera magna estimare et agnoscere, Ita ‘Confiteri’ [53] est omnia opera eius confessionem eius intelligere et videre et decorem. [54] Sed hic opus est luce intellectus et quod primo ipsum Dominum confessione [55] et decore ornauerit intus, quam ab eo possit decorari et confiteri [56] foris. [[Maxime sanctos et Ecclesiam eius, in quibus lucet confessio et [57] decor eius.]] Omnia enim opera Dei

Luther posits the general rule that all things must be examined by the spiritual intellect which reaches to their interior, before a judgment is made about them. Nothing can be judged by its superficial appearance alone.<sup>728</sup>

The function of the theological intellect in Luther's thought can therefore be summarized as the ability to understand God in all things, an ability given through faith in Christ. All things point to Christ as their beginning, content and end. For Luther the whole visible world is a covering or vestment of God, under which the presence of God can be seen by the light of faith. Thus our analysis can be summarized by a quote from Luther's exposition of Psalm 103:2, "With confession and beauty you covered yourself in a cloak of light as in a garment"<sup>729</sup>:

**In a cloak of light as in a garment.** Understand this in the same threefold manner as the preceding. Because, first, the garment of light is the glorious humanity. Second, tropologically, it is faith and the entire Church. Third, it is every creature understood in the spiritual light. Fourth, however, what it is anagogically we do not try to say, as it is where the holy angels and all creatures in their new brightness encircle their Lord. But in the meanwhile we have an enigmatic light.<sup>730</sup>

First, faith opens up the understanding of Christ as God and man, first despised and then glorified. Second, it opens up the understanding of the Church and its spiritual things and faith, including the Scripture and sacraments. Third, it opens up the understanding of all creatures as beautiful works of God pointing to spiritual reality. The proper object of faith is God, hidden under all external things. However, at the same time faith shows all the external things in its light. Yet at the same time, Luther maintains the difference between the light of faith and the light of glory. The light of faith remains an enigmatic light, mixed with and seen under the cover of Christ's human nature and the darkness of

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sunt Confessio Dei, laudantia, [58] ostendentia, confitentia Deum. Similiter omnia sunt decor eius, quia eum [59] decorum et pulcherrimum ostendunt. Sed hoc non videt in rebus et creaturis, [60] nisi qui ipse intus decorum et confessionem habeat a spiritu. Non autem [61] habet, nisi prius negationem sui et humilitatem feditatis sue habeat. [62] Vnde qui se aliquid esse putant, Multam feditatem putant in rebus esse et [63] Deum neque esse neque decorum esse. Quia ipsi nondum fedi et negati [64] sibi sunt, Omnia enim sunt pulcherrima et recte Deum confitentia."

<sup>728</sup> WA 55, II, 977, 2451-2464: "[2451] 118, 130 **Declaratio ser[monum t]uorum illu[minat]; et intellectum dat** [2452] **paruulis**. [2453] Hoc est, vt dixit, quod mirabilia sunt, quia paruulis dant intellectum [2454] et excecant superbos, qui contenti de superficie verbi auditi dedignantur [2455] 4, 367 | scrutari ipsum, et prompti sunt ipsum Iudicare et damnare secundum [2456] faciem, antequam Scrutentur. Disce igitur hic obsecro [2457] **Regulam Generalem**. [2458] Nullius dictum aut factum, Nullius Consilium aut [2459] laborem mox Iudices, Sed ante omnia Scruteris primum [2460] interiora eius. Nec species et superficies te fallat. Hoc [2461] autem optime facies, si nunquam tuo sensui credas, Sed semper tibi ipsi [2462] suspectus alios meliora sapere arbitreris, Ac sic promptus, paratus, Cupidus [2463] sis semper magis doceri, Iudicari, audire, quam docere, Iudicare, [2464] audiri."

<sup>729</sup> "Confessionem et decorum induisti amictus lumine sicut vestimento." See WA 55, I, 682, 21-23; WA 55, II, 800, 31; 801, 68.

<sup>730</sup> WA 55, II, 801, 68-73: "[68] 103, 2 BI 205 **Amictus lumine sicut Vestimento**, eodem modo intellige triplicitate [69] predicta. Quia primum Vestimentum Lucidum Est humanitas gloriosa. [70] Secundum tropo[logice] fides et tota Ecclesia. Tercium omnis creatura [71] spirituali luce intellecta. Quartum autem, quod in Anagoge est, nos [72] non attentamus dicere, Vbi Angeli sancti et omnis creatura noua claritate [73] circundabunt Dominum suum. Interim Enygmaticum habemus lumen."



the believer's carnal nature. In the future, God shall be known in clarity, without the covering of faith and the hindrance of the flesh.<sup>731</sup>

However, one further reservation needs to be made here concerning the development of Luther's thought as manifested in the sources. As already pointed out above, as Luther's thought moves from the *Dictata super Psalterium* towards the *Operationes in Psalmos*, the significance of the third point (i.e., understanding the created things in the light of faith) seems to diminish. The intellect of faith retains its function of seeing divine, spiritual, intellectual and theological content under the cover of the humanity of Christ, Scriptures and sufferings, but the idea of the whole creation functioning as a sign of the spiritual seems to vanish. This change may be connected with the weakening of the role of theological Platonism in Luther's thought. Visible things are no longer compared to invisible things primarily in terms of their general metaphysical nature (e.g., fleeting vs. eternal, empty vs. solid, finite vs. infinite), but in terms of their double hiddenness or hiddenness under contraries. Thus especially the visible evil things (i.e., cross, suffering and passions, foolishness of the Scripture) become the hiding place of God.<sup>732</sup> Further inquiry into the role of faith in understanding the creation in the other writings of Luther falls outside the scope of this work. In my opinion it would be worthwhile in order to further examine the nature of this shift.

One can see here, how Luther joins in his understanding of faith as the theological intellect created by the infusion of the divine light, to the theological tradition of divine illumination. For Luther, the understanding of faith is not primarily propositional, but is knowledge revealed by divine illumination. This illumination is received only in connection with Christ, who is the access to the invisible world, through the light of faith. In its essence, this divine intellectual light allows one to understand Christ as the internal and eternal Word and Wisdom in all things: i.e., as their first and final cause. In this sense, the intellect of faith has an interpretive function with regard to the whole of reality, even though the understanding of theological objects such as Christ the Incarnate, the Scripture and the Church, where God is hidden under contraries, is in the foreground. Thus with regard to the tradition, Luther places very much stress on the light of faith. This light essentially functions as the true intellect or higher mind of the believer. It is very strongly contrasted with the light of the natural reason, which only grasps sensible things. Nevertheless, for Luther there is also the higher light of glory, which is yet more clear and bright than the light of faith. Compared to it, the light of faith is still shadowy and enigmatic. The precise difference between the light of faith and the light of glory will be examined in the next main subchapter.

### 3.3.2.2 Faith as Moral Direction

In the previous subchapter we examined the nature of the light of faith with regard to the intellect. This chapter will focus on the light of faith with regard to the affect, or will, of the human being. As we have seen, for Luther the term affect (*affectus*), used as a synonym for will (*voluntas*), heart (*cor*) and love (*amor*), signifies the orientation of the

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<sup>731</sup> WA 55, II, 799, 1 – 801, 67.

<sup>732</sup> See chapter 2.3.3.1.

person as a whole. The affect has two possible orientations: When turned away from God, it is carnal, servile and self-seeking; when united with God, the highest good, in faith, it is spiritual, free and self-giving.<sup>733</sup>

Previous research has contained discussion about whether Luther's concept of faith is related primarily to the affect, or to the intellect. Günther Metzger and Miikka Anttila among others emphasize the role of the affect, interpreting faith as trust in the unknown. Reinhard Schwarz and Antti Raunio represent the view that the knowledge of an object must come first before the will can be oriented towards it, thus giving priority to the intellect.<sup>734</sup> Even Luther himself sometimes seems to vacillate over which to give pre-eminence to.<sup>735</sup> One finds, for example, an oft-quoted text in the *Dictata super Psalterium*, where (in connection with Ps. 118) Luther says that faith does not illumine the intellect but the affect, as faith blinds the intellect.<sup>736</sup> However, as has been argued in previous chapters of this study, the idea that faith is a light with regard to the intellect permeates the entire corpus of Luther's writings. On the other hand, we have seen that Luther also insists, that the natural light of the intellect must be extinguished and made darkness. Thus, in my opinion Luther's interpretation of Ps. 118 should be understood as speaking about the natural intellect. That is, in this text Luther speaks of the intellect with regard to its natural light, which becomes and must become darkness when the superior light of faith is received. Other similar texts emphasizing the role of the affect and trust and describing the birth of faith as stepping into darkness, speak either of the first infusion, or of the augmentation, of the light of faith in tribulations. These passages thus concern a special event and do not constitute a description of the normal relation between faith and intellect outside of such trials.<sup>737</sup> If we examine the *Dictata's* exposition of Ps. 118, we can see that this text as well actually speaks about the beginning of faith, as it continues

<sup>733</sup> See e.g. WA 55, II, 639, 257 – 640, 285; 865, 13 – 866, 28; 894, 101 – 896, 140; AWA 2, 40, 3 – 41, 10; 43, 21 – 44, 20; AWA 2, 177, 12-22. See also chapters 2.4.1.2 and 2.4.1.3.

<sup>734</sup> See Schwarz 1962, 125-127 (note, however, his analysis of exceptions to this rule on p. 131-134); Raunio 2001, 180-182; Metzger 1964, 116-121; Anttila 2013, 107-113. Cf. Ozment 1969, 111-117.

<sup>735</sup> Compare, e.g., WA 55, I, 301 gloss 10 and the text of the next footnote with WA 55, II, 137, 11-16 and WA 55, II, 279, 11-12.

<sup>736</sup> WA 55, II, 962, 2027 – 963, 2049: “[2027] 118, 105 **Lucerna ped[ibus] m[ei]s Verb[um] t[uum] et Lumen semitis meis.** [2028] Mira sententia. Cur non Lucerna oculis meis et Lumen visus? Nunquid [2029] pedes possunt illuminari aut semitę videre? Sed natura fidei expressa [2030] est pro ista vita. Nam oculos oportet captiuari in obsequium Christi [2031] Et solo verbo duci, quod auribus percipitur, oculis non videtur. Quia Inuisibilia [2032] credimus, Sed non inaudibilia. Quare Verbum quidem non illuminat [2033] oculos, sed nec aures. Et tamen est Lucerna, quia pedes dirigit et [2034] affectum, non intellectum requirit fides. Non vt intelligas, Sed vt velis [2035] oportet, Non vt scias, Sed vt facias ea que audiuntur. Et non Errabis, si [2036] credideris et iueris, licet non videris. Tantum securus vade in audita, quia [2037] Lucerna erit pedibus tuis verbum eius Et Lumen semitis tuis. Non requiritur, [2038] nisi vt facias que nescis, opereris que non intelligis, Euadas quo [2039] ignoras, ducatum sequens verbi, et stultus fias, tuum sensum amittens. [2040] Tanquam si in tenebris ducem sequarem viam quam ignoras, optime dicis [2041] ad ducem: tu quidem es lumen pedum meorum, Sed non oculorum, quia [2042] nihil video et tamen recte gradior, ac si viderem. Ego quidem erro et [2043] nescio, Vbi sim, et tamen pedes mei quasi viderent Lumen, ita certo eunt [2044] rectam viam. Sic enim fides non intellectum illuminat, immo excecatur, Sed [2045] affectum; hunc enim ducit quo saluetur, et hoc per auditum verbi. Audiens [2046] enim Affectus verbum incipit ire post ipsum nesciens quo. Igitur mirabile [2047] est verbum Dei, quod lucet pedibus et semitis. Non sic verbum Literę et [2048] humanę sapientię quod euacuat fidem, quia comprehendere facit quod [2049] dicit et lucernam oculis sese ostentat.”

<sup>737</sup> See WA 56, 374, 5-21; 377, 23 – 379, 21; AWA 2, 299, 20 – 301, 19; 318, 5 – 320, 14. See also chapter 2.4.2.1

with the statement that the faith of the beginner is first less bright and more closed (*clausum*) to the mind, like an oil lamp (*lucerna*), but with experience the intellect receives more light.<sup>738</sup> Therefore this and similar texts cannot be taken as a description of the general relationship of the intellect and affect in faith, as Metzger and Anttila do. Rather, they describe the birth of faith from the perspective of a person who in the beginning is only carnal and does not yet comprehend the light of faith. Such a person has just begun to ascend from natural cognition to the cognition of faith, which is still incomprehensible. But after the believer has been made anew by the infusion of the light of faith and has acquired experience and spiritual education (*eruditio*) through that light, faith becomes a guiding light both for the understanding and the affect. Therefore, it must be said that for Luther faith is, in general, a light for the intellect and the affect alike. Illumination by faith removes both the impediment of the intellect and the impediment of the affect, converting both towards God.<sup>739</sup> With regard to the intellect faith is light that shows truth<sup>740</sup>, with regard to the affect it is light that shows good.<sup>741</sup>

Luther speaks of faith as an ascent (*ascensus*) and extasis which elevates the mind of the believer to God. This elevation extracts, withdraws and reduces (*reducit*) the believer from the multiplicity of external works and circuitous ways, and directs (*dirigit*) him to the right way. That right way is faith, in which all good things are given and from which they flow forth.<sup>742</sup> On the one hand, its object is God himself; on the other hand, it consists of the understanding of the final spiritual causes or reasons (*novissimis, rationes*) and specific moral criteria.<sup>743</sup> Thus faith as intellectual cognition shows how true goods are spiritual and intellectual, and how sensual and temporal goods are evil for the soul. Furthermore, only by adhesion to the better good things in faith can the soul turn away from temporal goods and recognize the spiritual good things hidden under sufferings.<sup>744</sup> Therefore one can distinguish between faith as showing moral criteria (theoretical knowledge, faith as illumination), and faith as directing the believer by the knowledge of these criteria (practical knowledge, faith as direction). Moreover, when Luther speaks of faith as direction, this term is both spiritual (as faith straightens the affect and directs it towards God), and concrete (as faith guides people in concrete things). Below we will first

<sup>738</sup> WA 55, II, 963, 2049-2059: “Deinde Nec hoc Vacat, Quod Non [2050] ait ‘Lucerna semitis et lumen pedibus’. Quia Verbum includit lumen sicut [2051] Lucerna candelam, et hoc pedibus. Sed semitis est Lumen non ita clausum. [2052] Cur hoc? Nisi quod primo fides incipientis est minus clara et magis [2053] clausa menti ac Velut Lucerna. Sed Vbi ire ceperis et facere quod credis, [2054] iam Via clarius cognoscitur quam pedes tui, Ita vt clarius lumen habeas [2055] ex operando, quam solo affectu credendo. Quia dum credis, clausum habes [2056] lumen in affectu, Sed dum operaris, iam velut educto lumine per experientiam [2057] ducis in via recte. Multo enim illuminatiores sunt in fide practici [2058] quam speculativi, vt etiam philosophus dicit in metaphisicis, Quod Expertus [2059] certius operatur.”

<sup>739</sup> WA 55, I, 648 gloss 8; WA 55, II, 743, 105 - 744, 116.

<sup>740</sup> See, e.g., WA 55, I, 790, 23-27; WA 55, II, 722, 134-142 and chapter 3.3.2.1.

<sup>741</sup> See, e.g., WA 55, I, 22, 3 - 24, 2; WA 55, II, 80, 28 - 81, 7; WA 55, II, 730, 185-196 as well as chapters 3.2.3 and 3.3.1.

<sup>742</sup> WA 55, I, 216, 12 - 220, 1; 220 gloss 9; 754, 30 - 756, 6; 756 glosses 3 and 4; WA 55, II, 544, 281-302; WA 57, b113, 20 - b114, 11.

<sup>743</sup> See WA 55, II, 783, 134-138; WA 57, b188, 13-16 vs. WA 55, I, 512, 1-8; 512 glosses 17 and 18; WA 55, II, 499, 14-20; AWA 2, 203, 3 - 204, 5.

<sup>744</sup> WA 55, I, 520, 1-8; 520 glosses 17 and 18; WA 55, II, 499, 14-22; WA 56, 193, 5-10; WA 57, b188, 7-15; b228, 4 - b229, 4.

examine the knowledge of the moral criteria provided by faith, and then discuss the function of faith as the dynamic guiding principle which directs Christians.

As we have seen, with regard to the affect the primary object of faith is God as good, both in a general and in a distinct sense. However, as was the case with the knowledge of God as truth, the knowledge of God as good also functions as a criterion through which other aspects of reality are understood. Thus the light of faith functions as a criterion with regard to the person who believes, when he is brought before God by that light. It illumines the believer such, that he can recognize the sin that is in him. It constitutes a higher criterion of good, to the knowledge of which the believer is elevated (insofar he becomes spiritual by faith), so that he can discern the evil of the flesh. Through it the carnal, incurvate nature of the natural light is seen and can be judged as being contrary to grace and God.<sup>745</sup> Precisely through this illumination the human being is able to confess himself a sinner and God as good, and through that confession give to God what is God's and to himself what is his (i.e., to each his own, filling the criterion of righteousness). In this way God's coming out of himself (*exire*), when he creates faith in the human person, leads the human being to enter into himself (*introire*) and to know his own sinful and evil state through the knowledge of God received in faith. This recognition, moreover, is not only theoretical but practical. It leads to correction of the affect, will and appetitive powers, and to the growth of practical virtue, because the light of faith creates beauty (*pulchritudo, decor*) when it shines in the soul.<sup>746</sup> The light also gives moral instruction to the intellect with regard to the Holy Scriptures, so that it can understand things that are to be hoped for and loved, and thus access the intimate and internal moral sense of the Scripture instead of the external letter. In this way the light directs the spirit, or the spiritual will.<sup>747</sup> And even with regard to all creation, the instruction (*eruditio*) that the intellect receives from faith is accompanied by the growth of the affect, when they both understand and comprehend ever more clearly how admirable and miraculous the works of God are. In this sense, according to Luther all creation is intended for the help of the intellect and the affect likewise.<sup>748</sup> The light of faith works harmoniously with regard to both the intellect and the affect so that they support each other and grasp different aspects of the same reality: i.e., truth and goodness.

What is surprising, however, is that in these texts Luther does not relate the theological affect distinctly to the concrete humanity and sufferings of Christ. Its birth is directly

<sup>745</sup> WA 56, 345, 23-28; WA 56, 431, 19 – 432, 6.

<sup>746</sup> WA 55, II, 748, 19-38; 856, 128-137; WA 56, 229, 7 – 230, 8.

<sup>747</sup> WA 55, II, 938, 1360 – 939, 1376: “[1360] 118, 68 **Bonus es tu; et in Bonitate tua doce me Iustificaciones t[ua]s.** [1361] Ergo ego malus? Vtique. Sed satis supra dictum est de bonitate. [1362] Atque hic Ecce iterum ‘doce me’ inquit, tangens vtique moralem; non autem [1363] Moralem, que in moribus et ceremoniis sit, quoniam speciem pietatis [1364] multi habent virtutem eius abnegantes, Et moribus omnia simulant, Sed [1365] ‘moralem’ appellamus et ‘doctrinam’ eam notitiam, que spiritum, i. e. spiritualem [1366] voluntatem duntaxat dirigit in volendo, agendo, patiendo, amando, [1367] odiendo. Nam que mentem et intelligentiam dirigunt, i. e. vt sapiat que sapere [1368] debet, intelligat que intelligere debet, que in nostra potestate fieri vel [1369] non fieri penitus non sunt, vt Credibilia et sperabilia atque diligibilia, [1370] cum allegoriis et mysteriis suis, pertinent ad intellectus dationem seu ad [1371] illuminationem. Sed Moralia et doctrinalia ad ea, que per nos fieri, tolerari, [1372] dici, audiri cogitarique possunt ex intimo spiritu, non tantum in [1373] superficie et litera. Vnde Vtrunque Apostolus in Epistolis suis obseruat: [1374] primo Intelligibilia et que sunt mentis, vt intelligat, tradit, Vt Rom. per XI [1375] 4, 340 c[apita]. | Deinde doctrinam dat spiritui et voluntati a 12. vsque ad finem. [1376] Ita et in aliis quoque facit.”

<sup>748</sup> WA 55, II, 511, 138 – 512, 182.

connected to the intuition of the passion of Christ in only a few places. Usually spiritual goods are presented instead as the opposite of visible things. The reason for this seems to be that Luther understands the theological affect as an ontological concept created by grace. It does not operate within the psychology of the human person as a created being. Purely sensible things, therefore, cannot affect the affect. Rather, internal divine instruction of the will is required, as is the case with the theological intellect. Even the intuition of the passions of Christ is related to an internal pulling (*trahere*) by the Father, which causes the believer to perceive the grace of Christ. It is precisely this internal being drawn and being led in faith which creates the free and joyful affect in the Christian.<sup>749</sup>

Having made this observation we can now move to the second function of the light of faith with regard to the affect: its dynamic nature as a guiding principle for Christians. As we have seen, for Luther the light of faith allows the believer to immediately grasp the goodness of God in joy and delight, as well as to judge himself and other things.<sup>750</sup> At the same time, however, the light of faith also has the function of directing and instructing the believer through this life to the eternal life. With regard to this function, the good things grasped in faith function in the manner of the final cause guiding the will. All good things are shown in the light of the face of God, the light of faith, grasped by the intellect of faith.<sup>751</sup> These good things satisfy the soul and turn it away from temporal, visible and carnal goods. Nevertheless, the spiritual goods are acquired in this life only partially and incipiently.<sup>752</sup> According to Luther, this is the reason why the life of the Christian is called a “way”. The Christians travel this way by faith, progressing from virtue to virtue, as their soul is filled with the divine good, towards the Eternal Jerusalem.<sup>753</sup> However, they have not yet arrived; they still need the guidance and direction of the light of faith as they

<sup>749</sup> WA 57, a102, 19 – a103, 9; WA 57, b114, 7-20; WA 2, 587, 27 – 588, 20.

<sup>750</sup> See chapter 3.3.1.

<sup>751</sup> WA 55, I, 292, 18-25: “[31, 8] **Intellectum**<sup>6</sup> scil. spiritualium, quod fit per fidem **tibi** o homo gratis **dabo**<sup>7</sup> **et instruum** docebo per filium incarnatum **te in via hac** scil. quam docuero in Christo filio **qua gradieris: firmabo** et tunc in perpetuum et stabilius **super te oculos meos** beneplacitum habebō super te et dirigam te in bonitate . [31, 9] **Nolite fieri** per incredulitatem spiritualium bonorum **sicut equus et mulus** vt qui solum secundum carnem sapiunt et sentiunt : **quibus non est intellectus** scil. spiritualium bonorum, Sed tantum sensus etc.”

WA 55, II, 783, 134 – 784, 145: “[134] 101, 3 **Non Auertas faciem tuam a me**. Sepe dictum est, Quid facies [135] Domini significet, Scil. ipsum spiritum distinctum contra literam, que est [136] dorsum, vt Psal. 79.: ‘Ostende faciem tuam et salui erimus’. Psal. 4.: ‘Signatum [137] est super nos lumen vultus tui, Domine.’ Et 88.: ‘In lumine vultus tui [138] ambulabunt.’ In ista autem luce et facie omnia bona comprehenduntur, [139] Quia Est nihil aliud nisi Scire Ihesum Christum. Et hunc scire est omnia [140] scire et habere. Facies enim Notitia est Domini, Quę nunc per fidem in [141] nobis est, tunc autem per speciem. Sensus ergo est: Ne auertas a me spiritum [142] et fidem et spiritualia bona, sicut in illis facis, qui diligunt vanitatem [143] et querunt mendacium. Auerte ergo a me, si libet, diuitias, gloriam, sanitatem [144] et quicquid potest caro habere in hac vita; tantummodo faciem tuam [145] ne auertas.”

<sup>752</sup> WA 55, I, 520, 1-8; 520 glosses 17 and 18; WA 55, II, 864, 345-355; WA 56, 193, 5-10; WA 57, b188, 7-15; b228, 4 – b229, 4.

<sup>753</sup> WA 55, I, 716, 19 – 718, 3: “**Et deduxit eos in viam rectam** secundum Euangelium in fide : **ut irent** de virtute in virtutem proficiendo **in ciuitatem habitationis** eternam Ierusalem. [106, 8] Et in hoc **Confiteantur** laudem dicant **domino misericordiae eius** i. e. beneficia que misericorditer contulit in ista tentatione : **et** supple: ‘eodem misericordię confiteantur’ **mirabilia eius filiis hominum** que sunt per facta ipsis exhibitā<sup>5</sup>. [106, 9] **Quia satiauit** sic in viam rectam 4, 207 deductam <sup>1</sup> **animam inanem** ‘vacuam’ cupiditatis temporalium<sup>6</sup>: **et sic animam esurientem** spiritualia **satiauit bonis** spiritualibus.”

WA 55, I 718 gloss 6: “GLOSSA:<sup>6</sup> quia prius est ‘animam vacuum’ fieri quam esurire. Et bis dicit ‘satiauit’ ad expressionem promptitudinis et largitatis diuine.”

journey on the way. By this guidance is meant that the heart of the believer is made “right” or “straight” and given direction, when it is tended by faith and hope towards God and the spiritual good. Without faith it is not possible for the heart to be right, as God is invisible and incomprehensible to the natural capacities. A person cannot tend towards him who is the true good through them. Therefore, the heart of carnal people is never right and is without direction. Carnal people strive towards good by looking for it in a roundabout way in the created things that are merely circumferential signs and coverings of the true good, i.e., God. The heart of carnal people remains fixed on those created goods; they seek to find God in them and through them. They hope that God would be with their flesh (i.e., serve the wishes of their carnal nature) rather than being against their flesh and with the spirit and the internal man.<sup>754</sup> However, in faith God is present in the spirit and for the spirit, not in the flesh and for the flesh. For the flesh, God resides in a dark cloud (i.e., is not perceivable) but for a spirit he resides in a shining cloud which directs the spirit.<sup>755</sup> From that cloud shines forth the light of the face of God which directs everyone who is to be saved through the deserts and tribulations of this world.<sup>756</sup> This is how Christ present in

<sup>754</sup> WA 55, II, 543, 273 – 545, 310: “Impossibile enim est, Qui opera Christi in corde [274] figit et vera credit verba eius, quin promptus fiat mandata [275] eius exquirere. Et econtra Impossibile est, quod is [276] exquirat, qui operibus et verbis eius non credit ac non [277] figit in memoriam. Figitur enim per fidem memoria operum Domini. [278] Sed hec omnia non potest facere, nisi prius de se et mundo desperet et in [279] Domino spem ponat. Tunc enim potest opera eius et verba figere in cor, [280] postquam euulserit spem seculi et nudus in Domino ceperit sperare. Quare [281] 3, 567 77, 8 primum | est, vt sit ‘pauper spiritu’ etc. Igitur illi omnes sunt **generatio** [282] **praua et exasperans sicut patres eius. Generatio, quę non direxit** [283] **cor suum, Et non est creditus cum Deo spiritus eius.** Dirigitur [284] enim cor, quando a se ad Dominum tenditur; quę est vera directio, [285] quę fit per fidem et spem. Non enim potest cor in Dominum dirigi nisi [286] fide, quia Dominus spiritus est et Inuisibilis ac incomprehensibilis; ideo [287] fide opus est, quę ad eum pertingat. Illi autem non dirigunt cor, Sed deprauant [288] et inflectunt a Domino ad se, ad carnem, ad mundum, ad creaturam; [289] Et tot inflexiones, quot habent desyderia et desyderabilia. Oculum [290] quidem et carnem dirigunt, Sed non cor. Et quare non direxit cor? Quia [291] ait: ‘non est creditus cum Deo spiritus eius.’ Hoc est, quod dixi: [292] quia sine fide ista directio non fit. Ambage enim voluuntur in circumferentia [293] omnis venti; fides enim est ‘compendium’, per quod breuiter venit ad [294] pacem et salutem; hec est via recta. Sapientia autem carnis querit pacem [295] et bonum, Sed per ambages, et tamen ad ea nunquam pertingit. Sed mira [296] locutio, quam b. Aug[ustinus] lucide et pulchre exponit, sic scil.: ‘Spiritus [297] eorum non est creditus’ scil. ab eis ‘cum Deo’, q. d. ab eis non est creditus [298] spiritus eorum cum Deo, hoc est ipsi non crediderunt, quod spiritus [299] eorum cum Deo operari deberet. Voluerunt enim et volunt semper, Quod [300] Deus cum carne eorum operari debet, scil. dando eis et promovendo eos in [301] hiis, quę sunt carnalia et temporalia. Et ideo ‘non crediderunt spiritum [302] suum cum Deo’. Non enim ait: Non est creditus in Deum, vel: in Deo, Sed [303] ‘cum Deo spiritus eius’. Et in hoc iterum nostra translatio expressiorem [304] habet spiritum quam heb[raica], quę sic dicit: ‘Et non creditur Deo spiritus [305] eius.’ Igitur Qui non credit spiritum suum cum Deo, Videat carnem suam [306] cum diabolo; Quod et contigit illis vsque hodię. Potest etiam sic Accipi: [307] ‘Non est creditus cum Deo spiritus eius’, i. e. non crediderunt nec putauerunt, [308] Quod spiritualis sensus et interior eorum homo esset cum Deo, Sed [309] crediderunt, quod caro eorum esset cum Deo. Et ideo credita est caro eius [310] cum Deo, supple: esse et operari.”

<sup>755</sup> WA 55, I, 650 gloss 1; WA 55, II, 754, 14-19.

<sup>756</sup> AWA 2, 200, 3 – 201, 14: “Optime autem vocatur fides *lumen vultus dei*, quod sit illuminatio mentis nostrę divinitus inspirata et radius quidam divinitatis in cor credentis infusus, quo dirigitur et servatur, quicumque servatur; qualiter Ps. 31<8> describitur: ‘Intellectum tibi dabo et instruum te in via hac, qua ambulabis; firmabo super te oculos meos’, et Ps. 43<4>: ‘Non enim in gladio suo possederunt terram, et brachium eorum non salvavit eos, sed dextera tua et brachium tuum et illuminatio vultus tui.’; item Ps. 88<16>: ‘Domine, in lumine vultus tui ambulabunt’. Hinc gaudet Ps 26<1>: ‘Dominus illuminatio mea et salus mea’. Hoc figuratum est in columna ignis et nube, quibus filii Israel regebantur et ducebantur per desertum. <Ex 13,22> Sic enim sola fide ducimur per vias ignotas ac desertas omnium hominum auxilio, hoc est, passionibus et tribulationibus. Atque ut illic columna praesens ante faciem eorum ibat, ita hic fides

faith directs the Christian through this life. Using additional biblical images Luther says that in the midst of prosperity and of carnal pleasure Christ is the pillar of cloud, because it is more difficult to follow and perceive against the light of the day. In adversity and in the midst of suffering of he is the pillar of fire, which is perceived more easily against the night of suffering. Being thus present in faith for the spirit, Christ leads the faithful through the prosperity and adversity of this world, as he led Israel through the Red Sea and in the desert. He is the pillar of cloud and fire in the hearts of the believers, by whose guidance they cross over from this world to the next so that their heart remains protected and they remain fixed on the goal.<sup>757</sup> Therefore, the relationship between the “upright” of heart (*recti*) and the “crooked” (*pravi*) is connected with how they relate themselves to the future. The crooked turn their heart to the present: to visible things and the letter. The upright of heart, on the other hand, turn their heart towards the future glory through the spiritual goods which they already know in faith. Thus for them a light is rising in the spirit, whereas the crooked remain in darkness. The faithful are leaving the world by the means of their intellect and affect and progressing in the knowledge of spiritual things, turning their face towards heavenly things.<sup>758</sup>

From the above analysis we can see that the nature of the spiritual affect is very much connected to Luther’s understanding of the nature of temporal and spiritual goods and the Platonist ontology behind them. This ontology is, moreover, connected to the relationship between the letter and the spirit; law and gospel (i.e., grace, or faith). Spiritual goods are received in connection with the external word through the Holy Spirit. They then become the internal reality that constitutes the new nature of the believer and which guides his affect. In itself, the external word or letter is dead and empty like a hollow reed. The Spirit, however, gives it its content, “increase” (*incrementum*), its spirit. Luther describes it as a speedy teacher, which joined to the external word teaches by writing living letters in

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praesentem deum habet, ut velut a vultu praesentis dei illuminatio cordis procedat, ita ut rectissime et propriissime *lumen vultus dei*, id est, agnitio et fiducia praesentis dei sit.“

<sup>757</sup> WA 55, II, 548, 426 – 549, 449: “[426] 77, 13 **Interruptit mare et perduxit eos, et statuit aquas quasi in vtre.** [427] Iam incipit numerare mirabilia, que illi et nos obliti sumus, in patribus [428] nostris facta. Mare enim Est Mundus allegorice et confusio prosperitatis [429] et aduersitatis. Et per medium illarum duxit sanctos Apostolos et martyres [430] patres nostros in celestia reg[na]. Et ‘statuit eas’, vt non possent illos [431] obruere vtrinque Nec prosperitas a dextris nec aduersitas a sinistris. [432] Fides enim est ‘vter’ ille, qui istas aquas cohibet et eis imperat, vt stent et [433] non noceant, et facit spiritu suo iter per medium illarum. Sed et nos quoque [434] sic perduxit et perducit in baptismo. Ait Apostolus: ‘omnes baptisati [435] sunt in nube et mari’, que sunt baptismi duo, scil. flaminis et sanguinis. [436] ‘Nubes’ enim fidem significat, que est baptismus flaminis, Et ‘Mare’ persecutio, [437] que est baptismus sanguinis. [438] 77, 14 3, 571 Vnde Sequitur: **Et deduxit eos in nube diei, et tota nocte in illuminatione** [439] **ignis.** [[Vtrunque enim n[on] simul necesse est imp[er]ari, licet [440] tunc n[on] nisi successiue fieri posset.]] Hęc est [Christus in carne dux [441] noster. Caro est nubes et columna ignis, i. e.] fides Christi. Ipsa enim est [442] Nubes, ipsa columna ignis. Dies autem et nox idem, scil. sapientia carnis; [443] quam diem et noctem Iob maledicit. Quia facit videre bonum carnis, Et sic [444] est dies; Et malum spiritus non videre, Et sic est nox. In vtroque enim fides [445] dux nostra est, ne bonum carnis sequamur et vramur per diem concupiscentie, [446] neque sequamur malum spiritus. Et difficilius est nubem quam [447] columnam sequi, quia plura illicia habet dies quam nox, bonum quam [448] malum. Potest etiam sic accipi, Vt dies prosperitas, Nox aduersitas sit in [449] hac vita; in vtroque enim fidem secuti sunt sancti Dei, patres nostri.”

See also WA 55, I, 660, 1-3; 660 gloss 9.

<sup>758</sup> WA 55, II, 866, 45 – 868, 81; 877, 5-9. Through this exposition one can see, how for Luther the orientation of the person is indeed important, but the right orientation is realized through the presence of Christ, in whom the future goods are already enigmatically possessed. They are not possessed only as a future goal, but as something which as participated in guides the will of the believer.

the heart, conferring with a single word or expression the maximum good that fills the heart of the believer.<sup>759</sup> The letter is the reed of a slow scribe which leads to wandering in the desert, whereas the spirit (i.e., the internal content of the external word given in faith) is fast and direct.<sup>760</sup> Luther connects these two to the Law and Gospel: i.e., to law and grace; the law of the letter and the spiritual law. The law of the letter contains only empty signs. It is heavy and irritating, as it does not grant the grace for its fulfillment. As an external form and letter the Gospel is similar to it, but when God works in the spirit along with the external word, he teaches its internal content and gives the grace required to fulfill it. Therefore the law must be formally (*formaliter*) written into the heart, so that it can be fulfilled. When it is written in this way by the spirit, it becomes an internal law, the law of the spirit. In this way by internal education (*eruditio*) God purifies the heart and writes living, luminous and burning letters to it. Illuminated by them, the believer can call God his Father. This education (i.e., faith) is the intellectual light of the mind and flame of the heart, the law of faith, the new law, the law of Christ, the law of spirit, the law of grace, a law not written in stone but on human hearts. In faith, the believer is therefore united with the eternal Word (i.e., the content of the external word understood spiritually) which makes the heart share in its properties so that the heart becomes pure and good like the word it is attached to. Thus Luther says it is precisely faith which is the “good tree” providing good fruit. Faith is the living and experienced new will, written on the heart of the believer by the finger of God, the Holy Spirit. Therefore without faith and the divine love in the will which results from it, all external good works are evil, vanity and madness. No created virtue can suffice to fulfill the divine law. Apart from Christ (*extra Christum*) no one can do any good. Even faith, without the spirit which gives it its content, is dead faith. But faith in Christ is the fulfillment and fullness of all laws, because it possesses Christ, the one who fulfills them. It is the whole substance of the new law in which Christ lives and works.<sup>761</sup>

Therefore the relationship between faith and good works is not accidental. Above all, there is a substantial unity between them. This unity stems from the nature of divine good, which is self-diffusing.<sup>762</sup> It is the nature of faith, according to Luther, that it is operative and effective (*operosa et efficax*), active and working (*activa et actuosa*).<sup>763</sup> True faith is not speculative (*fides ficta*) or acquired (*acquisita*), but infused (*infusa*) by the Holy Spirit, living and one which effects all in all (*omnia in omnibus*). Thus it is necessarily followed by love; if love is not present, then certainly it is not true faith.<sup>764</sup> Accordingly, Luther calls faith the substance, foundation, fountain, origin, principle and first-born of all

<sup>759</sup> WA 55, II, 243, 90 – 246, 155; 323, 378 – 325, 427; 430, 132 – 432, 204.

<sup>760</sup> WA 55, II, 246, 191-195.

<sup>761</sup> WA 55, I, 404, 24 – 408, 4; 405 gloss 2; 506, 6-9; 506 glosses 13 and 15; WA 55, II, 247, 199-208; WA 2, 469, 7-20; 499, 20-33; 563, 20-39; WA 57, a73, 10 – a74, 4; a79, 3 – a80, 5; b113, 20 – b114, 11; b137, 10 – b148, 17; b195, 20 – b196, 19.

<sup>762</sup> Interestingly Dieter 2001, 245-246 arrives at the same conclusion, that faith follows the idea of self-diffusing good, even though he has not noted the textual evidence in which Luther explicitly makes this connection.

<sup>763</sup> WA 57, a38 gloss 1: “GLOSSA:<sup>1)</sup> [19]‘Operatur’ hoc loco non opera, sed energiam ipsam seu efficaciam [20] significat, ut ca. 2.: ‘Qui operatus est Petro, operatus est et mihi’, i. e. [21]qui efficax fuit vi quadam occulta. Ita et fides est ‘operans’ i. e. operosa [22]et efficax, potens seu, ut dicitur, activa et actuosa, ubi littera legis est [23]impotens, ut supra: ‘infirma et egena elementa’.”

<sup>764</sup> WA 2, 566, 28 – 567, 23. See also WA 6, 85, 20 – 86, 1 as well as chapters 2.4.1.2 and 3.5.1.



spiritual graces, gifts, virtues, merits and works. They all flow from the new spiritual will, which is given by Christ in faith.<sup>765</sup> Faith is the head of all virtues and the principle of all good, as Christ is the head of all Christians.<sup>766</sup> It is the moral sunrise from which all good propositions rise in the soul, and which kills all evil movements, vices, suggestions and thoughts. However, in this life it is always dawning, not yet having become full day.<sup>767</sup> Thus faith constitutes the spiritual nature of the Christian, a nature which seeks to serve the will of God. It kills the old will of sin and constitutes a new will in the Christian, changing him into a new man.<sup>768</sup> In this sense faith also constitutes the beginning of the moral life of the believer with regard to his neighbour. What happens in faith is that the Christian becomes in faith a son of God. That is, he is divinized so that with Christ and in Christ he sits and rules over the flesh in the spirit. Christ liberates the conscience from the servility of sin, judges the vices of the flesh and subjugates the flesh to serve the spirit and God. This happens not at once, but incrementally.<sup>769</sup> The presence of Christ in faith thus becomes a foundation, rock (*petra*), foothold (*locus*), and substance on which the spiritual life of the soul is built. On one hand this fixed, non-transitory place is the foundation from which the soul ascends to the eternal things.<sup>770</sup> On the other hand, it is the solid place on which the “feet” (i.e., affects) of the soul are grounded, and upon which the soul can “walk” (i.e., act and operate in the world). In this sense the affects of the believer can even be said to be the feet of Christ himself, on which he walks in the world.<sup>771</sup> Through faith, the Christian becomes the blessed man (*beatus vir*) whose will is in the law and grace of God, and who walks without coercion on the paths of God.<sup>772</sup> By faith he is a co-operator with God, a person of right heart whom the light of faith directs and on whom it shines, creating spiritual beauty. Thus a Christian, insofar he or she is led by the spirit, freely follows the law of God and can be said to be co-operating with God. On the other hand, however, Luther also calls the Christian an instrument of God, whose works are the works of God, not his own. This is because faith and grace are the necessary requisites of all good works. In the infusion of faith the Christian is passive and not a co-operator. However, when faith comes to be incarnated in works, the believer is active in the sense that he becomes a tool for God through whom and in whom God operates. In this way the pure, internal, passively received theological virtues are “incarnated” into external visible virtues and acts, and faith is born into action.<sup>773</sup> These external acts, however, are not without fault because they take place through the flesh that is corrupted. Only the theological virtues in the spirit are pure, as they are wholly divine.<sup>774</sup>

From these ontological presuppositions of Luther's it follows that the good works stemming from faith flow from it spontaneously and joyfully, without coercion. However, what they are exactly and what they are not seems to be something Luther does not usually

<sup>765</sup> WA 55, II, 639, 269 – 640, 285; AWA 2, 40, 3 – 41, 10; 44, 8-17.

<sup>766</sup> WA 55, I, 724 gloss 1; AWA 2, 298, 6-7.

<sup>767</sup> WA 55, II, 777, 405 – 778, 442.

<sup>768</sup> WA 56, 334, 14 – 336, 17.

<sup>769</sup> WA 55, II, 844, 108 – 846, 144.

<sup>770</sup> On faith as the spiritual foothold, see also chapter 2.4.1.2.

<sup>771</sup> WA 55, II, 218, 2 – 219, 16; 641, 335 – 642, 357; 873, 5-9. 847, 187-191; WA 57, b226, 8-16.

<sup>772</sup> WA 55, II, 638, 249 – 639, 268; AWA 2, 43, 21 – 44, 17.

<sup>773</sup> WA 55, II, 697, 310-322; WA 57, b142, 24 – b143, 6; AWA 2, 320, 15 – 321, 5. See also Stoellger 2010, 293-298.

<sup>774</sup> AWA 2, 317, 6 – 318, 10. See also WA 55, II, 846, 138-144.

describe, for one reason or another. Such a description might even run against his theological intention, which is based on the dynamic and efficient nature of the divine good and the principle that God works all in all (*omnia in omnibus*). A closer description of those works might limit Christian freedom. Even when Luther deals with a concrete interpretation of a concrete command, he emphasizes meditating on it and extending it from an external deed to a review of internal thoughts, emotions and motives.<sup>775</sup> Nevertheless it is clear that for Luther, contraries to good works must also exist. Luther mentions evil movements, vices, suggestions and thoughts. Although he does not list what these are, it seems implausible that all of them can be interpreted merely as internal motives. Vices or suggestions are, after all, usually motivating principles for an evil habit or action. In the texts examined here Luther does not describe their nature more closely. He only provides their general criteria, which are: carnality, preferring created goods to God, and the incurvated love of oneself. This omission of Luther's seems consonant with a distinction he makes between being wicked (*impius*) and being a sinner (*peccator*). A sinner is one who does crude evil deeds manifestly. He is, according to Luther, easy to recognize. Luther does not seem to consider the possibility that there could be arguments between Christians on the nature of right external moral action. It seems that for him the concrete course of action is somehow self-evident. The more dangerous are, according to Luther, the wicked, who lack true faith and try to cover their evil affect with external deeds of righteousness. Those deeds are performed out of servile love of merits, or fear of punishment, in order to appear pious. Therefore Luther calls people engaged in them doubly a sinner (*duplex peccator*): sinners who claim that their sin is righteousness. They can be recognized by the hate which they express if the righteousness of their deeds is questioned, because they rely on the goodness of the external deed, not on faith.<sup>776</sup> From Luther's deliberations here we can see that his primary interest is constantly in the internal man, his relation to God and the quality of his affect. When this affect is right, Luther trusts that external good deeds will follow. Because of this view Luther is not interested in pondering specific moral questions, but is interested in the overall orientation of the human being. Nevertheless, Luther's approach as reflected in the sources is somewhat problematic, as it does not give guidance for solving specific moral conflicts that may arise in the Church. However, more concrete guidance can be found in other locations in Luther's works, e.g., in the Catechisms, although they also follow the general principle of meditating on the commandment and then attempting to apply its internal spirit.

In summary, we can say that for Luther faith is a light with regard both to the intellect and the affect. For the affect it is a light which shows good, in accordance with the traditional interpretation of Ps 4, an interpretation which Luther joins in. In an indiscriminate sense the object of faith with regard to the affect is God as good, but it can be said that in a discriminate sense the light of faith functions first of all 1) as a criterion of good. This function as a criterion takes place especially with regard to the final ends and in the sufferings, in which faith sees the spiritual goods that are contained in and hidden by them. The light of faith also has the function of a criterion with regard to the person himself, when it shows the evil of the flesh. In addition, it has a function with regard to understanding the moral content of the Scriptures, and being affected by the

<sup>775</sup> See e.g. AWA 2, 41, 16 – 43, 17.

<sup>776</sup> See e.g. AWA 2, 31, 15 – 32, 16; 36, 1-9; 37, 21-27; 40, 3-13; 235, 1 – 237, 13; WA 5, 518, 1-18.

intuition of the passions of Christ. In terms of moral philosophy, faith is here connected with moral principles which regulate action.

The second function of faith is that it 2) motivates and leads the Christian. It directs the Christian through this life to the future life by fixing the heart on the future spiritual goods already possessed incipiently in faith. Drawn and directed by these superior spiritual goods shown by the light of faith, the Christian can resist being allured by temporal prosperity and adversity. Furthermore, faith is dynamic in its nature. Because it unites the believer with the living Christ and God, the highest good, it satisfies the soul internally insofar the person is spiritual. It produces all good movements and virtues, subduing the flesh and its vices. It is the necessary requirement for all good works in the theological sense, as it creates in the believer a new will grounded in God's spiritual law, which wishes to serve God freely. The ontological status of the new will as divine virtue also explains why Luther rejects all (e.g., Scholastic) interpretations of moral psychology in which the principles of action would stem from a natural capacity (e.g., from natural reason's participation in the divine law). If the human being had a natural capacity to good, he would seek self-justification (as he already does according to Luther, but vainly, as he does not know the true good). The divine nature of faith on the one hand guarantees the passivity of the believer in justification. On the other hand, however, the dynamic nature of divinity results in faith itself being operative and creating action. Thus faith is constantly incarnated in good works. These works can be attributed either to God, in the sense that he is their *causa sine qua non*, or to the believer, in the sense that he functions in faith as God's instrument in doing good. In this sense, in terms of moral philosophy, faith has the function of moral motivation. However, Luther's emphasis only on the general qualities of the new spiritual will causes the difficulty that Luther's theory does not give very good answers to concrete moral dilemmas. Rather, the specific nature of faith as a moral criterion seems very hazy. In the sources examined here Luther does not give an account on the particular contents of the moral criteria or principles shown by the light of faith. Their nature is described only generally, and these descriptions are mostly related to the ontological status of those criteria: i.e., to the ontological difference between the letter and the spirit, law and grace, etc.

Finally, it can be said that the two functions of faith with regard to the affect (i.e., faith as criterion and faith as direction), seem to be related to God as the first cause and as the final cause. As the first cause, God is the source and criterion of all good. As the final cause, he is the reality towards which the believer progresses by faith. Luther does not, however, make an explicit distinction between these two in his writings; rather, it seems that for him these two aspects are united in God. This coinciding of aspects corresponds to Luther's Christological metaphysics, according to which Christ is the center and end of all things, the One to which all things are drawn, and the reality signified by all things.<sup>777</sup> This same ontological framework can be seen as the background for Luther's understanding of the functions of faith with regard both to the intellect and the affect. For the intellect of faith, Christ is the Word and Wisdom in which all things are constituted and the consummation which they reflect. For the affect, Christ is the Good as the criterion of good and the ultimate end. Thus the understanding of reality that lies behind

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<sup>777</sup> WA 55, I, 486 gloss 7, 4-10; WA 55, II, 342, 126-140. See chapter 2.3.1

the functions of faith seems to follow the Platonic scheme of *exitus* and *reditus*, going forth from and returning to the First Principle.

### 3.4. Faith as the Enigmatic Middle Stage between the Earthly and Heavenly Vision

#### 3.4.1. Faith as Theological Sign and Partial Possession

In the previous chapter we examined Luther's understanding of faith as an intellectual light which has God as its immediate object, i.e., seeing God "face-to-face". On the one, hand faith grasps God as truth and goodness; on the other hand, it perceives the whole creation in the divine light which flows from God as its source and points to God as its fulfillment. Luther stresses this immediacy of faith in multiple places, and stresses that God is present in the light of faith itself. On the other hand, however, Luther also speaks of faith as some kind of intermediate stage between a purely carnal view of things and the bright vision of God participated in in the heavenly glory. In this sense Luther speaks about faith as an enigmatic light, or even as darkness. On the one hand, God is the immediate object of faith but on the other hand, the knowledge acquired in faith is still somehow shadowy, partial and hidden.<sup>778</sup> Furthermore, one can even find passages in Luther's works that speak about faith as a sign and not yet reality (*signum factum, nondum autem res*), which shows (*ostendit*) or possesses future, not-present things. When examined without regard for their context, these statements even seem to exclude from faith the possession of Christ as its present object. This exclusion runs contrary to the analysis of the relation of the ontological and epistemological aspects of faith presented in the previous chapter.<sup>779</sup> What is the relation of these differing statements to each other, and can they be reconciled?

The wider context for the question at hand lies in the history of the doctrine of illumination. The doctrine of Augustine and Bonaventure was criticised for ontologism, especially by the Thomists. The underlying question concern how to distinguish the vision of God by the wayfarer through the light of faith from the vision of God in Heaven through the light of glory, if by the light of faith the wayfarer already possesses immediate knowledge of the divine ideas or divine nature. The Thomist resolution to this question lies in distinguishing between the three lights, of which only the light of glory possesses the divine nature as its direct object, the light of faith having only created mediating

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<sup>778</sup> As also noted by Schwarz 1962, 141-147.

<sup>779</sup> See, for example, chapters 2.3.3.2 and 3.2.3 as well the following texts:

WA 55, II, 80, 29 – 81, 2: "Sed lumen [30] vultus tui (i. e. fides, per quam cognoscimus faciem tuam et gloriam [31] tuam) signatum est (i. e. signum factum, nondum autem res, quia [32] 'fides est argumentum rerum', non autem ipse res) super nos (i. e.) [1] desursum: quia 'omne donum desursum est', et fides est super omnem [2] sensum sursum; hoc est enim 'lumen', in quo 'ostenduntur nobis bona'."

AWA 1, 511, 14-19: "Ac per hoc recte Apostolus eam dicit 'Argumentum non apparentium', id est, signum et indicium rerum, non res ipsae." ... Hoc alibi dicit 'sperandum rerum substantiam', id est, possessionem seu facultatem non praesentium, sed futurarum rerum esse fidem"

species as its object. The Scotist answer is to reserve the intuitive knowledge of God as present object only for the state of the heavenly vision. Luther's understanding of the difference between the stage of faith and the stage of heavenly vision appears to provide a unique answer to this question.

As is well known, German scholarship reads in an exclusive sense Luther's definition of faith as sign and not reality, and excludes the presence and participation of the spiritual goods in faith. The interpretation offered by Schwarz, Ebeling and Joest holds that faith merely changes the orientation of the person towards the future spiritual things, which as yet remain absent. The spiritual things are then possessed only in hope, not in reality (*in spe, nondum in re*). Furthermore, this reading has been connected to an interpretation of Luther's use of the term "substance" (*substantia*), according to which Luther has been portrayed as a representative of relational ontology. According to this view for Luther the term "substance" does not mean a self-subsisting ontological entity, but instead that upon which one bases his faith, hope and love, and from which one derives the quality of one's own existence as a person. Thus, for example, when faith is defined as "the substance of things hoped for" (*substantia sperandorum*), this means that in faith one bases one's existence on the extrinsic, future things that are hoped for, and on the act of hope itself, the definition excluding the real participation in or possession of those things.<sup>780</sup> Perhaps the best example from Luther's writings supporting this view is the definition of faith given in the 1516 scholia of *Dictata* on Ps. 4:7, which replaced the missing original scholia:

But the light of your face (i.e., faith, by which we know your face and glory), is sealed (i.e., made a sign, not yet the thing itself [*signum factum, nondum autem res*], because 'faith is an argument of things', but not the thing itself) upon us (i.e., from above: because 'every gift is from above' and faith is above all understanding, from above: it is the 'light' in which 'good things are shown [*ostenduntur*] to us').<sup>781</sup>

Based on this and a number of similar passages one could draw the conclusion that for Luther the light of faith serves a function similar to its function according to St. Thomas. It seals upon the intellect truths or concepts, which function as a mediating factor between God (and the future spiritual goods) and the believer. God, as the final object of faith, is only grasped in the future glory. The content of faith is the promising (*promissio*), showing (*ostensio*) and announcing of those things, in the sense that faith points towards them. It is a sign, an argument (*argumentum*) and testimony of things which are promised,

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<sup>780</sup> See Ebeling 1951, 192-194; Schwarz 1962, 154-164; Joest 1967, 238-250 as well as Ozment 1969, 105-111. The interpretation is based on Luther's discussion of the term substance at WA 55, II, 388, 137 – 389, 165 and WA 55, II, 416, 971-986. Schwarz admits, however, that in a certain sense through the word faith can possess future things, because a sign is also a form of presence (Schwarz 1962, 157-158). On the criticism of the interpretation regarding substance, see Juntunen 1996, 416-426. Saarinen 1993, 180-181 shows that the expression *in spe, nondum in re* is already used by Augustine and does not exclude participation, but is rather an expression of it. See also Schwarz 1962, 50-51 on the traditional definition of faith as the subsistence of those things in the soul which are hoped for to subsist in the future in experience or reality. The exact manner of this subsistence is defined in different ways by different authors.

<sup>781</sup> WA 55, II, 80, 29 – 81, 2: "Sed lumen [30] vultus tui (i. e. fides, per quam cognoscimus faciem tuam et gloriam [31] tuam) signatum est (i. e. signum factum, nondum autem res, quia [32] 'fides est argumentum rerum', non autem ipse res) super nos (i. e.) [1] desursum: quia 'omne donum desursum est', et fides est super omnem [2] sensum sursum; hoc est enim 'lumen', in quo 'ostenduntur nobis bona').".

things not present but absent, and which will be given in the future. They are possessed only in faith and hope: i.e., as hoped-for on the ground of God's sure promise, not yet in reality. Faith hears, knows and trusts God, his name and promises, but it does not yet see the reality of the things promised.<sup>782</sup>

As we have seen, however, one can also find in Luther's writings completely different accounts of the nature of the light of faith. In the *Operationes in Psalmos*, for example, Luther writes about the light of faith:

Faith is best called the light of the face of God, which is divine illumination of our mind and a kind of ray of divinity infused in the heart of the believer [...]. But as then the pillar was present and travelled before their faces, so now faith has a God who is present, so that the illumination of the heart proceeds as from the face of the God who is present, so that it is rightly and most properly the light of the face of God, that is, knowledge of and trust in the God who is present. For he who does not know or feel that God is present for him does not yet believe, does not yet have the light of the face of God.

It does not matter whether the light of the face of God is understood actively, in that he himself illumines us with his presence when he kindles faith – or passively as the light of faith itself, by which we with trust, feel and believe his face and presence. For 'Face' and 'countenance' signify presence in the Scriptures, as is known. They are the same and both are at the same time: the illuminating God and the illuminated heart, God seen by us and God who is present.<sup>783</sup>

From this text a totally different picture emerges of Luther's understanding of the nature of the light of faith. Here the light itself is divine, making God himself present and known in the heart, not in the future but now.<sup>784</sup> Are we therefore looking at a change in Luther's standpoint, from an emphasis on faith as a sign of absent things to an embrace of faith as participation in present things? Or can the texts be reconciled somehow? In my

<sup>782</sup> See WA 55, I, 568, 17-19; 569 gloss 6; 574, 12-15; 694, 13-23; 695 glosses 12, 15 and 16; 782, 17-20; 783 gloss 59; WA 55, II, 315, 151-157; 389, 157-159; 651, 213- 652, 219; 780, 38-46; 886, 189-193; 887, 214 – 888, 251; 911, 584-598; 915, 692-704; 980, 2547-2554; 985, 2706-2710; 989, 2834; 995, 2989-3006; 1006, 3315-3320; 1008, 3383-3389; 1020, 148-160; WA 56, 49, 12-15; WA 57, b12 gloss 1; b61, 8 – b62, 1; b65, 1-5; b138, 19 – b139, 19; AWA 2, 539, 20-25; WA 5, 544, 25 – 545, 1. See also p. 87.

<sup>783</sup> AWA 2, 200, 3 – 201, 21. "Optime autem vocatur fides *lumen vultus dei*, quod sit illuminatio mentis nostrae divinitus inspirata et radius quidam divinitatis in cor credentis infusus, quo dirigitur et servatur, quicumque servatur; qualiter Ps. 31<,8> describitur: 'Intellectum tibi dabo et instruem te in via hac, qua ambulabis; firmabo super te oculos meos', et Ps. 43<,4>: 'Non enim in gladio suo possederunt terram, et brachium eorum non salvavit eos, sed dextera tua et brachium tuum et illuminatio vultus tui.'; item Ps. 88<,16>: 'Domine, in lumine vultus tui ambulabunt'. Hinc gaudet Ps 26<,1>: 'Dominus illuminatio mea et salus mea'.

Hoc figuratum est in columna ignis et nube, quibus filii Israel regebantur et ducebantur per desertum. <Ex 13,22> Sic enim sola fide ducimur per vias ignotas ac desertas omnium hominum auxilio, hoc est, passionibus et tribulationibus. Atque ut illic columna praesens ante faciem eorum ibat, ita hic fides praesentem deum habet, ut velut a vultu praesentis dei illuminatio cordis procedat, ita ut rectissime et propriissime *lumen vultus dei*, id est, agnitio et fiducia praesentis dei sit. Qui enim praesentem sibi deum non novit aut non sentit, nondum credit, nondum habet *lumen vultus dei*.

Nihil ergo refert, sive *lumen vultus dei* intelligatur active, quo nos ipse presentia sua illuminat fidem accendens, sive passive ipsum *lumen fidei*, quo nos cum fiducia vultum et praesentiam eius sentimus et credimus – nam 'facies' seu 'vultus' in sacris litteris praesentiam significat, ut notum est. Idem enim est et utrumque simul est: deus illuminans et cor illuminatum, deus visus a nobis et deus praesens."

<sup>784</sup> Incidentally this text is discussed by Ebeling 1989, 333-336 but he does not in any way comment the discrepancy between present and not present things. See also Chung 2000, 87-90; 121; 138-139.

opinion the latter is the case. One needs to turn back only one page in the *Dictata* scholia, where faith as a sign and not yet the thing itself was emphasized, to find the following: “‘To hope in God’ is to be in Christ, our God, and to participate in him and so, existing in him to hope in God.”<sup>785</sup> Or one can look at the following gloss to Ps. 17, in which Luther defines the term “face of God” as “knowledge of God who is present”<sup>786</sup>, or to the scholia in which Luther proclaims that God is present immediately in the soul by faith.<sup>787</sup> Both Luther’s early and late Psalm expositions speak of God as being in the midst of the believers in their souls, like he is present in the midst of the Church.<sup>788</sup> Christians are even described in the *Dictata* as ‘seats’ of Christ, on whom he sits and in whom he is present by faith.<sup>789</sup> Therefore it seems clear that we are not looking at a chronological development, but rather that the texts need to be reconciled in another way.

In my opinion, the key to understanding Luther’s divergent texts with regard to the presence of the divine things in faith are the three stages of God’s work in the world discussed above in chapter 2.3.3.3. The first stage is the visible creation, which merely points to God and the final glory as a sign of an absent thing. The second stage is the Church Militant, in which the spiritual, invisible and divine things are already present and participated in, but as hidden, in accordance with the principle of the Incarnation. The theological signs of the Church, such as the sacraments, and the Church itself, not only point to something outside of themselves as the visible creation does, but they already participate in and hiddenly offer that, of which they are a sign. The third stage for Luther is the heavenly glory, the Church Triumphant, where spiritual, invisible and divine things are seen directly, immediately and without cover of humanity.<sup>790</sup> In this scheme the things of the Church Militant stand in the middle, participating in both realities: the visible and the invisible.

Connected to this scheme is the duplicate way in which Luther speaks about something being “present” or “reality”. For Luther these terms are usually connected to an immediate, direct and unobstructed vision. Therefore, for carnal eyes only carnal things which are visibly seen with the physical eyes are “present” and “real”. Likewise, for the souls in the heavenly vision only the divine things that are seen by that vision are “present” and “real”.<sup>791</sup> But for the Church, which is positioned between the two, the divine things are not an object of direct, unobstructed vision, but rather are concealed under the humanity of Christ and under the humanity of the believer. They are “seen”, but only spiritually and internally by faith. Although Luther defines faith itself as immediate and direct knowledge of God face-to-face,<sup>792</sup> it is only immediate and direct for the spirit and the new man, and obstructed by the flesh for the old man and the carnal people who

<sup>785</sup> WA 55, II, 79, 22-23: “Quia ‘sperare in Domino’ Est in Christo, Deo nostro, esse et participare [23] ei ac sic in ipso existendo sperare in Dominum.”

<sup>786</sup> WA 55, I, 136, 7: “**a facie eius** cognitione Dei presentis”

<sup>787</sup> WA 55, II, 371, 429-433: “[429] Quia **Dominus in eis** per fidem **In Sina**. Non Sina quecumque, Sed [430] quę est **in sancto**. In ipsis est Dominus, ipsi autem in Sina, Sed Sina est [431] in sancto. Hec sunt tria tabernacula, Anima, corpus et Ecclesia. Quia [432] Deus immediate est in anima, Et sequenter cum anima in corpore et cum [433] vtroque in communitate Ecclesie, que est sanctum.”

<sup>788</sup> See e.g. WA 55, I, 608 gloss 16; 650, 12-13; 651 glosses 2 and 3; WA 5, 506, 12-25.

<sup>789</sup> WA 55, II, 1020, 161 – 1021, 196. See also WA 55, II, 591, 34-42.

<sup>790</sup> See WA 55, II, 253, 370 – 254, 393 (text in footnote 282); WA 55, II, 692, 177-196.

<sup>791</sup> See chapter 2.3.3.3.

<sup>792</sup> See chapter 3.3.1.1.

cannot see that hidden reality. Therefore, with regard to what is seen by the senses the things present in faith are not present in *re*, as the senses and objects of faith stand in contrast with each other. But with regard to the invisible and hidden reality, the Church already now possesses its eternal object.<sup>793</sup> However, that reality is only possessed in faith, in contrast to seeing.<sup>794</sup> Accordingly Luther speaks of three faces of God: 1) the Incarnation, 2) the spiritual advent (i.e., faith) and 3) the final advent (i.e., Christ's coming in glory). In faith the face of God is seen spiritually, not in terms of direct and unobstructed vision, unlike how humanity is seen in the Incarnation and how the divinity will be seen in the heavenly glory.<sup>795</sup> Therefore the objects of faith can be said to be at the same time present (for the spirit in faith) and absent (as they are not yet the object of the unobstructed vision attained in heaven). Furthermore, one can say that they are possessed already now (with regard to faith), but still hoped for (with regard to their unveiled and complete possession in the heavenly glory). With this in mind, it is understandable that Luther often speaks about the vision or understanding of faith as that which grasps the reality (*res*) instead of mere appearances (*species*). In this case, primacy is given to the spiritual reality, and visible things are contrasted to it as illusory and transient. This is the sense in which the theologian of the Cross sees "the real thing", or things as they are.<sup>796</sup> But for the bodily eyes, the things present under the appearance of the Cross are hidden under contraries. Therefore, depending on which perspective is given primacy, Luther is

<sup>793</sup> WA 55, II, 758, 50 – 759, 63: "[50] In Scripturis et psal[mis] 'Videre' distinctum ab 'intelligere' accipitur [51] pro visu exteriori, Vnde et hic ita oportet accipi. Quia vere Christum in [52] carne viderunt omnes fines terrę Iudeę, sicut et Isaiam 40. allegans Iohannes [53] bap[tista] Luce 3. dicit: 'Et Videbit omnis caro salutare Dei', scil. omnis [54] caro Iudeorum; iis enim promissus fuit. Et ad eum populum quoque [55] Scrip[tura] tantum loquitur, Licet per eorum visum corporalem mystice intelligatur [56] visus interior omnium gentium. Nam omnes gentes viderunt, [57] scil. per intellectum ex verbo euangelii nunciantis Christum. Vnde quod [58] Bl 193 Psal. 5. et 8. \* dicitur: 'Mane astabo tibi et videbo', et 'Videbo cęlos tuos, [59] opera' etc., Et Psal. 62.: 'Vt viderem virtutem tuam et gloriam tuam', similiter [60] de visu corporali oportet accipi. Quia loquitur ibi in persona seu pro [61] persona futuri populi tempore Christi, Ita vt ex auctoritate Apostoli [62] Hebr. 2. Cogamur Psal[mum] 8. exponere de mystico mundo, dicentis: 'Non [63] enim angelis subiecit orbem terrę futurum, de quo loquimur'."

WA 55, II, 152, 13-17: "[13] **Absconditum** ergo Ecclesie Est ipsa fides seu spiritus, quod idem [14] est. Quia in fide et spiritu viuunt, i. e. in cognitione et amore Inuisibilium. [15] Sicut carnales non in fide sed in re viuunt et non in spiritu Sed [16] in carne; ideo non sunt in abscondito Sed in manifesto, voluuntur in [17] rebus visibilibus."

WA 55, II, 886, 184-193: "[184] 115, 10 Credidi. Intentio psalmi Est docere tantum spiritualia bona in [185] Christo expectare, et promissa in lege de spiritu et fide intelligenda esse, [186] non de re temporali, contra Insipientiam carnalium Iudeorum, Qui fidem [187] respuunt et rem expectant. Rem inquam temporalium; Nam fides habet [188] rem ęternam. Dicit ergo: [189] Credidi, i. e. fidem habui, et hęc tota mea possessio, que est substantia, [190] i. e. possessio rerum sperandarum, non autem substantia rerum [191] presentium. Non ait 'diues sum, potens sum et delicatus sum'. Quia vltra [192] hęc omnia querit aliud et id allegat, quod presens non est, quod fide tantum [193] tenetur."

<sup>794</sup> WA 55, II, 783, 134-141: "[134] 101, 3 **Non Auertas faciem tuam a me**. Sepe dictum est, Quid facies [135] Domini significet, Scil. ipsum spiritum distinctum contra literam, que est [136] dorsum, vt Psal. 79.: 'Ostende faciem tuam et salui erimus'. Psal. 4.: 'Signatum [137] est super nos lumen vultus tui, Domine.' Et 88.: 'In lumine vultus tui [138] ambulabunt.' In ista autem luce et facie omnia bona comprehenduntur, [139] Quia Est nihil aliud nisi Scire Ihesum Christum. Et hunc scire est omnia [140] scire et habere. Facies enim Notitia est Domini, Quę nunc per fidem in [141] nobis est, tunc autem per speciem."

WA 55, I, 751 gloss 8: "GLOSSA.<sup>8)</sup> Geminat 'a facie' Quia Christus duas habet naturas, secundum quarum vnam reuelatus est in re, secundum alteram autem in fide, et adhuc reuelabitur etiam in re."

<sup>795</sup> WA 55, II, 780, 26-46. See also WA 55, I, 751 gloss 8.

<sup>796</sup> See AWA 2, 107, 20 – 108, 5; 294, 3-5; 455, 13-18; WA 5, 418, 9-18. See also chapter 2.4.2.2.



able to refer to the content of faith either as absent or present. It is absent from the carnal eyes and present for the eyes of faith, but not yet present in the terms of the unobstructed heavenly vision.

When Luther speaks about faith being a sign or a testimony, what he means thereby is not a sign of an absent thing, but a theological sign which participates in the reality it signifies. It is a sign of a thing which is present. However, it is not present in a publicly demonstrable manner, but is hidden under its visible opposites. In the case of faith this means that faith itself is hidden under the flesh of the believer. Luther himself verifies in a passage concerning the meaning of the terms “sign” and “testimony”, that they are to be interpreted thus:

Something is often called testimony in distinction from a thing, as a sign in distinction from the signified. Because carnal people do not want faith that concerns future things, which is a sign or an argument or a testimony of non-appearing things, but rather want the present thing itself. [...] But a testimony is something hidden in which the promised thing is possessed, but not yet manifestly. But they do not wish it to be hidden, but manifest, not spiritual and internal, but external and manifest.<sup>797</sup>

The passage continues with Luther explaining that the Church Militant is a sign and figure of the Church Triumphant. It is, enigmatically, already that which it will be in the future. An internal continuity rather than an external relation exists between the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant. The Church Militant is incipiently the same Church Triumphant, as it will be made that by God. Likewise the faithful already partially see God by faith, and through that vision are being prepared for the final, heavenly vision.<sup>798</sup> Luther also provides a similar definition concerning the words of God: God does not give

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<sup>797</sup> WA 55, II, 1019, 113-120: “Testimonium enim sepe dictum est, quod ad [114] differentiam rei dicitur, Sicut signum ad signatum. Vnde Cum Carnales [115] nolint fidem futurorum, quae est signum Vel argumentum Vel testimonium [116] rerum non apparentium, Velint autem potius rem ipsam presentium; [...]. Nunc autem testimonium [119] est absconsum, in quo possidentur res promissae, Sed nondum [120] exhibite. Illi autem Nolunt esse absconsum, Sed manifestum, non esse [121] spiritualis et interior, Sed exterior et manifestus.”

<sup>798</sup> WA 55, II, 1019, 121 – 147: “Et aptissime dicit: ‘Testimonium [122] Israel’, Quia Ecclesia militans nondum est, quod futura est [123] triumphans, Sed est signum, figura, absconditum et omnino fidele testimonium [124] sui ipsius. Quia in enygmata est, quod futura est in specie; in [125] signo est, quod futura est in re; in absconso est, quod futura est in manifesto; [126] in fide est, quod futura est in visione; In testimonio est, quod futura [127] est in exhibitione; In promisso est, quod futura est in impletionem. Sic enim [128] in omni artis opere, Si quid ab artifice paratur, videlicet Mensa, vestis, [129] domus, optime dici potest: Nondum hoc est Mensa, vestis, domus, etc., Sed [130] certissimum signum et testimonium, quod fiet mensa, vestis, domus, cum [131] iam sit partim tale, Sed nondum perfectum. Ac sic non alieno signo et [132] testimonio picto vel dicto testatur, quid sit futurum, Sed seipso. Ita Ecclesia [133] 4, 403 paratur modo, quia edificatur ut ciuitas. Et nondum | quidem est Ciuitas, [134] Sed pars et testimonium, quod sit futura ciuitas. Ita quidem nondum [135] est Israel, Sed fidele signum, quod erit Israel, quia paratur ad visionem [136] Dei et partim, scilicet per fidem, eum videt. Secundo, Ut dixi, Etiam est [137] Ecclesia testimonium et non reale quid, Quia non exhibet se talem, qualia [138] promissa sunt in ea et de ea, Sed solum testimonium dat. Quia futura [139] sunt eius bona, quae non potest in presentia exhibere, presentia autem [140] bona ignorat; ergo ipsa remanet testimonium incredulis et credulis, Sed [141] incredulis in testimonium et scandalum, Credulis autem in testimonium [142] et resurrectionem. Per eam enim Deus testatur toti mundo futura bona. [143] Ideo est testimonium Dei ipsa Israel ad mundum, Sed nondum exhibitio; [144] Exhibebit autem eam in futurum, et cessabit ipsam habere in testimonium. [145] Ergo Non omnis Israel sunt tribus Domini, Sed solum qui sunt [146] testimonium; ii enim sunt veri Israel Et sic ascendent, Non Israel qui est [147] apparentia, Sed Israel testimonium.”

us the reality (*res*) but words (*verba*). But in these words the non-apparent things are already hidden in and possessed by faith.<sup>799</sup>

Therefore the relation between faith and heavenly vision is according to Luther not a relation between an absent thing and a present thing, but the difference between participation (*participatio*) and fullness (*plenitudo*). The Church Triumphant sees and knows God in his fullness, the Church Militant sees and knows God partially.<sup>800</sup> Thus the Church Militant is situated between the two extremes, passing from the visible and carnal world to the future world. In this sense, Luther does indeed emphasize that the signs, testimonies and words of God must be understood in a relative or relational manner. This means that through them a Christian already participates in eternal life; however he or she must at the same time progress forward. Therefore, relationality does not stand for the opposite of participation, as in the German scholarship, but for dynamicism, in which the participation is growing. Thus the Christian life is for Luther a continuing *transitus* from this life to the future one, a process which reflects the birth of Christ from the Father. It is a process in which the union with Christ and the infusion of faith is the starting point, which initiates the battle between the spirit and the flesh, as well as which initiates the healing and sanctification of the Christian.<sup>801</sup> The Christian therefore participates in both *saeculi*, “hanging” suspended between them by faith, which has already raised up his heart to the heavenly and invisible things.<sup>802</sup> Thus, when Luther writes that in faith Christ becomes our substance, this is not an expression of a purely relational ontology, but an expression of an ontology of participation. Faith is the beginning (i.e., the partial

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<sup>799</sup> WA 55, II, 989, 2833 – 990, 2840: “Mira [2834] est enim hæc petitio, Non nisi verba peti a Deo, non res, Sed signa rerum. [2835] Quis enim pro verbis tam anxie vnquam clamauit? Sed Quia in verbis per [2836] fidem abscondite sunt res non apparentes, Ideo habens Verba per fidem [2837] habet omnia, licet abscondite. Et ita patet, quod iste Versus petit literaliter, [2838] non futuram Ecclesiam nec eius bona, Sed presentem et eius bona, [2839] que non sunt nisi ipsum Euangelium gratie, quod est signum et verbum [2840] sperandarum rerum et non apparentium. Et tali cibo nos alit Christus.”

<sup>800</sup> WA 55, II, 1017, 72 – 1018, 100: “[72] Quod autem Lyra dicit in heb[reo sic haberi: ‘Quæ associatur ei simul’, [73] Est eiusdem sententia, Et ne quis non intelligat, quo modo dixi, Quod [74] Christus est nostrum idipsum, in quo omnes participamus, Quod si participamus, [75] eo ipso associamur omnes simul, i. e. in vnum, ei i. e. Christo. [76] Hæc enim associatio omnium fit per participationem eius. Quia dixi, quod [77] istud idipsum causa est vnionis, concordie, associationis, amicitie etc. [78] Quare nostra translatio expressit causam, heb[reus autem effectum eiusdem [79] rei.[80] Sed Vigilantissimum verbum posuit, quando ‘participatio eius’ dixit. [81] Quia in hac Vita (quod tam sepe dixi, Vt me prope pudere debeat, nisi [82] quod scio id quam infelicissime contemni hoc tempore a religiosis, qui id [83] maxime debent curare) Nunquam habet aliquis Sanctorum totum Christum, [84] Sed quilibet partem eius, etiam perfectissimi. Vnde et de Maria [85] Mag[dalena] (i. e. de Contemplatiuis, qui sunt perfectissimi) dixit: Non [86] totum optimum, Sed ‘partem optimam elegit sibi’. Quo circa qui sapiunt, [87] semper se nihil habere putant et nondum apprehendisse, Sed currunt et [88] festinant ac semper de nouo incipiunt, etiam cum consummauerint, Vt [89] apprehendant, obliuiscetes posteriora et in anteriora extendentes seipsos. [90] Tepidi autem et hypocrite, qui sibi iam sancti videntur, totum optimum [91] sibi elegerisse videntur, omnia habere et apprehendisse; ideo cessant [92] et tardant ac semper de nouo deficiunt, etiam cum nondum consummauerint, [93] obliuiscetes anteriora et in posteriora contrahentes seipsos ibique [94] quiescentes et stertentes. [95] 4, 402 In futura autem Ierusalem non erit participatio, Sed ex omni parte [96] beatitudo. Ibi non erit locus dicendi: Ecce iste bonus est, Nisi quod est [97] iracundus, superbus etc. Cessabit ibi hoc ‘nisi’, Vbi euacuatum fuerit, [98] quod ex parte est. Interim autem Dominus sustinet infirmitates, offensiones [99] nostras multas, donec perficiat, quod incepit, et ex participatione faciat [100] omnimodam plenitudinem.”

See also WA 5, 464, 36 – 465, 16.

<sup>801</sup> WA 55, II, 911, 584-607; 913, 662-678; 946, 1576 – 947, 1609; 971, 2287-2300; 974, 2376 – 975, 2403; WA 56, 173, 4-18; WA 2, 495, 1-5. See also chapter 2.2.1.

<sup>802</sup> WA 57, b98, 20-29; b185, 1-8.

possession) of the new life and of new creation of the Christian, which will be perfected in the future. It is the “firm place” (*fundamentum*), the initial possession of eternal good things, things which are seen and grasped by faith. In their dynamic nature, these things give the orientation to the soul, directing it towards the possession of the fullness of those things.<sup>803</sup>

The same dynamics of the different stages can also be seen in the way Luther discusses the nature of the faith of Abraham. The exact difference between Abrahamic faith and Christian faith lies in that Christian faith possesses more than only the external promise. Luther describes the faith of Abraham and the Patriarchs as faith in the promise regarding Christ. For them Christ was still hidden by the letter, not yet revealed and known immediately in faith. Because of its nature as a reference point for the reality that is later grasped in Christ, it is called “faith without form” (*fides informis*) and “faith in faith” (*fides fidei*).<sup>804</sup> To illustrate the nature of the letter hiding the content of the promise, Luther refers to it figuratively as the “first veil of the Tabernacle”. The Synagogue did not yet discern the spiritual goods hidden behind that veil. In the Passion of Christ the veil was torn and the Church, in which Christ rules spiritually (though hiddenly) came to be. The second veil, in turn, signifies the difference between the stage of the Church and the heavenly glory.<sup>805</sup> Therefore the Christian faith for Luther is not only faith in an external promise. It is faith in which the content of the promise is already in a hidden manner incipiently participated in through the words of the promise. The context for the passages where Luther speaks about the content of faith as “the sign of things, not the things themselves” is provided by the image of the Tabernacle and the nature of the Church as the middle stage, in which the spiritual things are grasped and possessed, but still only partially and hiddenly. They are already possessed in faith, which is itself the sign in and through which they are participated in. Faith, signified by the middle chamber of the Tabernacle, is the middle stage between the mere external letter and the direct heavenly vision.<sup>806</sup>

In a summary, one can state that Luther’s definition of faith as *signum* and not *res* does not mean (as it is often stated in the German research) that faith is a sign of an absent thing and that there is only an external relation between the believer and God constituted by faith. Rather, in its nature faith is a theological sign, a sign of the Church which

<sup>803</sup> WA 57, b151, 19 – b153, 10; b226, 8 – 229, 5.

<sup>804</sup> WA 55, II, 755, 52 – 756, 59: “[52] 96, 11 **Lux orta est Iusto** etc. Antiqui Iusti erant Iusti per fidem fidei nostrę, [53] Quia crediderunt et sperauerunt in fidem istam futuram, sicut Galat. [54] 3.: ‘Tenebamur conclusi in eam fidem, que reuelanda erat’. Et Ro. 3. dicit, [55] Quod ‘in sustentatione Dei precedentium delictorum ad ostensionem [56] Iustitię eius in hoc tempore propositus sit Christus propiciatorium’. Ergo [57] illis Iustis ex fide informi, i. e. ex fide fidei, orta est lux ista fides, que [58] nunc est. Sed Alii, qui non nisi carnem sapiebant Et erant non recti corde, [59] quia non expectabant fidem futuram, excęcati sunt et ceciderunt.”

See also WA 55, II, 866, 45 – 868, 81.

<sup>805</sup> WA 55, I, 240, 4-8; WA 55, I, 240 gloss 8; WA 57, b202, 8-18.

<sup>806</sup> AWA 1, 511, 12-21: “Et pulcher in isto versu diffinitio fidei describitur, quia est *lumen signatum super nos*. Quod ait *signatum*, indicat, quod sit signum et clausum adhuc novissimo velamen, licet sit *lumen* ad primum velamen. Ac per hoc recte Apostolus eam dicit ‘Argumentum non apparentium’, id est, signum et indicium rerum, non res ipsae.’ Quod autem dicit *super nos*, de iis, quae non possumus comprehendere, sed quae non ascenderunt in cor hominis, ubi captivare oportet intellectum nostrum. Hoc alibi dicit ‘sperandum rerum substantiam’, id est, possessionem seu facultatem non praesentium, sed futurarum rerum esse fidem. Qui enim credit, habet et possidet res sperandas, et est substantia eius apud deum per fidem.”

participates in the reality it signifies. It already confers an incipient vision of God, although this vision is only internal and hidden under contraries. Because of the hiddenness and partial nature of this vision, Luther can say in the same breath that faith both possesses its object, and that it does not yet possess it. Faith is the beginning of the transformation and possession which will be made perfect in the future resurrection. This is also the first aspect in which faith differs from the heavenly vision in the light of glory: The heavenly vision has the divine nature in its fullness as its object, but faith has partial knowledge and possession.<sup>807</sup>

### **3.4.2. Faith and the Human Nature of Christ**

In the previous subchapter we examined the nature of faith as a theological sign which already participates incipiently in the reality which it will possess in fullness in the future. The first difference between the light of glory and the light of faith is the degree of participation, as by faith human beings know God only partially. But we have also noted another aspect of faith: the divine things participated in in faith are hidden under contraries. The nature of these contraries seems to be dual. On the one hand, it is the humanity of Christ under which the divine good is hidden; on the other hand, it is the flesh and the old nature of the believer which obscures the divine reality. When Luther speaks about faith as darkness or enigma instead of as divine light (as earlier we have seen he often does), it is primarily these three things to which this notion is connected: 1) Compared to the full light of glory, the light of faith is dimmer and weaker; it does not yet fully grasp God and his mysteries. 2) Moreover, faith as the middle stage is also in some way still connected to the humanity of Christ and the incarnational nature of the Church, both of which function as a kind of ‘veil’ obscuring the divine light. 3) In addition to these, the old nature of the believer also forms an obstacle for the divine light, because it is opposed to and contrary to it. These in succession form three enigmatic aspects due to which faith can be called a enigma, shadow, cloud, veil, or even darkness.

The first aspect, the incomprehensibility of the divine nature, was already examined in detail in chapters 2.2.4 and 3.3.1.2, so only a short exposition is necessary here. This aspect means that God is incomprehensible in his essence. Accordingly, even as the immediate object of the mind in faith he transcends the capacity of the mind and is not comprehended fully by it. The mind must be humiliated in faith to follow that which it does not completely comprehend. This incomprehensibility, however, pertains not only to the divine nature but also to the Incarnation, the manner of which is incomprehensible. Incarnation also introduces another aspect of the enigma of the work of God: the hiddenness. In Christ, the Church and the Sacraments God is present as hidden under contraries.<sup>808</sup> Thus one aspect of the enigma of faith is the incomprehensibility, the other is the hiddenness.

With regard to the incomprehensibility, there are two approaches according to which God can be meditated on: ascent (i.e., divine nature), and descent (i.e., Incarnation). According to Luther, believers “ascend” in Christ when they recognize him as true God,

<sup>807</sup> Peura 1994, 79-85 arrives at similar conclusions.

<sup>808</sup> See WA 55, II, 138, 5 – 139, 2; 145, 14-17.

but “descend” in him when at the same time they recognize him as true man. Both are incomprehensible; Luther states, that by means of them both “a cloud” is formed in our intellect.<sup>809</sup> This cloud has two aspects or directions. First, Luther speaks of a cloud which ascends. This cloud refers to the supereminence of God: his remaining above our intellect. It constitutes the “superior waters” through which the divine light shines upon the intellect. It also seems to be analogous to the second veil of the Tabernacle, which stands between the partial knowledge of God in the light of faith and the future full knowledge of him in heavenly glory. Even Christians can be called clouds in this sense, when they ascend by faith and contemplation towards God.<sup>810</sup>

However, one can also speak in another sense, with regard to hiddenness, of faith as forming a cloud, of a believer being a cloud, or of Christ being present inside a cloud. It is this second sense we will examine in detail at this chapter. This sense refers to the hiddenness of God in the human nature of Christ as well as in the Church, the word and the sacraments and Christians. This hiddenness is a cloud which descends to those, who do not know God. Christians are also clouds in this sense, as by faith Christ is hidden in them from the flesh and unbelievers, and they carry the gospel to those who do not believe and see that presence. Luther even refers to the soul, body and Church as three tabernacles, because God is present in each of them in succession. This presence is not local and corporal, but spiritual and invisible, yet nevertheless it is connected to the humanity of Christ and the incarnatorial principle.<sup>811</sup> This descending cloud seems to be analogous to the first veil of the Tabernacle (i.e., the letter), because its exterior is seen by

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<sup>809</sup> WA 55, II, 139, 3 – 140, 19: “[3] 3, 125 ‘Inclinavit cēlos et descendit’, i. e. angelos celestes humiliavit [4] et descendere fecit, dum eos adorare fecit Dominum in infima natura, [5] Sicut figuratum fuit in Scala Iacob Genes. 28. ‘Caligo autem sub pedibus [6] eius’, i. e. incomprehensibilis est descensus eius in carnem, nescitur [7] quibus pedibus descenderit in carnem, vel quomodo stet in carne ista [8] maiestas tanta. Rursus ‘ascendit’, quando post mortem ad celos ascendit, [9] et ‘volavit’ super omnes angelorum virtutes in assumpta natura. Et hoc [10] modo sunt verba prophete ab illo versu: ‘Commota est’ vsque ad illum: [11] ‘Misit de summo’ etc. Colligamus itaque in summarium: [1] Primo ‘Inclinat cēlos et descendit’, Scil. per incarnationem, vt iam [2] dictum est, et ‘ascendit’ super omnes choros angelorum. Secundo [3] Cēlos inclinat et descendit, Quando omnes intellectuales naturas siue [4] angelicas siue humanas facit sese contemplari in natura omnibus Inferiori. [5] Et ascendit, quando idem ipse se facit contemplari in natura omnibus [6] superiori. Ascendunt ergo in eo, quando eum verum Deum agnoscunt, [7] descendunt, quando verum hominem agnoscunt. Tercio descendit, [8] Quando sese manifestat humilibus et infimis vt peccatoribus. Ascendit [9] autem, quando eos clarissima notitia celestium et diuinorum illustrat. [10] Et sic fere idem est descendere et ascendere. In hiis omnibus ‘Cēlos’, [11] i. e. animas, oportet ‘inclinari’ et humiliari, quia ‘humilibus’ solis ‘dat [12] gratiam’ et lucem sui. Quarto etiam in Sacramento altaris descendit; [13] ibi iterum celos inclinari et captiuare intellectum oportet, et sic potest [14] ascendere in cognitione spiritali. In omnibus enim requiritur, vt inclinetur [15] intellectus noster, et fiat ‘caligo’ in eo, i. e. captiuetur in obsequium [16] Christo. Quinto descendit et inclinat cēlos, quando apostolos et prelatos [17] facit suis subditis condescendere in vita actiua. Ascendit autem, [18] quando eos sursum eleuat in vita contemplatiua; vtrobique caligo et [19] tenebre sunt, Quia in fide ista omnia fiunt in hac vita.”

See also WA 55, I, 138, 1-9; 138 gloss 15; WA 55, II, 137, 7 – 138, 4.

<sup>810</sup> See WA 55, I, 138 gloss 15; 314 gloss 7; WA 55, II, 138, 2-11; 203, 17-24; 804, 129 - 805, 167. Compare to Gerson’s concept of two different darknesses, the darkness of the created things and the darkness of God in *Tractatus septimus super Magnificat*, De experimentalione Veritates (DP IV, 343-344). See also Schwarz 1962, 147-148.

<sup>811</sup> WA 55, I, 480-482 gloss 25; 650 glosses 1-3; WA 55, II, 371, 419-433; 376, 574-584; 754, 14-19; 1020, 161 – 1021, 196; 1024, 279-293; WA 5, 507, 34 – 508, 3.

those who are in the forecourt (i.e., the Synagogue), although its content is hidden from them.<sup>812</sup>

When faith is born, this first veil (the veil of Moses) is removed from the face of the mind. Thereafter the mind sees God by the light of faith emanating from behind the second veil. But this immediate, internal knowledge in the light of faith is not yet perfect in full clarity. It is not yet the light of glory; it does not yet see God in his divinity alone. It is made enigmatic by the humanity of Christ because of the interpenetration of the two natures in him, so that the light of faith can in some sense be said at the same time to be divine and human. Moreover, there is also the obscurity caused by the remaining flesh of the believer.<sup>813</sup> Luther refers to this shadowy nature of faith in his statement that a shadow (*umbra*) consists of light (which is divinity) and body (which is humanity). When Christ entered human nature he was made a cloud and shadow for us. This shadow, nevertheless, for the spirit is a bright light descending from Christ. For the body, however (which adds a second layer of hiddenness), it is obscure. As a light, it is seven times weaker in comparison to the heavenly clarity, in which the glorified body also will shine like a sun.<sup>814</sup> For the spirit the light of faith is therefore more dim than the light of glory, and for the body it is only darkness.

The light of faith can thus be pictured by means of the image of the middle chamber of the Tabernacle: a space extending between the two veils. At one end is the entrance covered by the first veil, the letter of the Scripture, the external knowledge of Christ as man. One passes through this veil through Christ, as well as the Sacraments, Scripture, faith and preachers. They are the “doors” of the Church or “clouds” which, following the principle of the Incarnation, are the external and material covering under which Christ is carried to the unbelievers. Entering through the veil of their external form represents the beginning of faith, the point at which Christ is recognized as God, his divinity is understood, the mind receives the light of faith, Christ enters the heart of the believer, and one enters into communion with divine things.<sup>815</sup> From there on, faith continues as a progression through the chamber, a progression in which the light of faith increases, the

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<sup>812</sup> WA 55, I, 240, 3-8; 597 gloss 2; WA 55, II, 682, 73 – 683, 80; 913, 662-669; WA 57, WA 57, b197, 20-24; b202, 8-18; b222, 10-23.

<sup>813</sup> WA 55, I, 240, 3-8; 474, 2-6; 650 gloss 1; WA 55, II, 371, 419-426; 443, 266 – 444, 286; 494, 141-147; 629, 7-10; 903, 342-367; AWA I, 511, 11-14.

<sup>814</sup> WA 55, II, 371, 419-426: “[419] 67, 15 Nota autem, Quod Supra dictum est **Zelmon** (quod vmbra vel vmbraculum [420] virtutis dicitur), hoc habet mysterium, Quia Vmbra constat ex lumine [421] et corpore: Lumen est diuinitas, Sol vrens per diem, Quia inimicitia [422] inter nos et Deum. Accessit corpus humanitatis, et facta est nubes et [423] vmbra refrigeriumque nobis. Sic ‘in protectione Dei celi commoratur.’ Et [424] Isaie 4.: ‘Erit vmbraculum diei et estus et Absconsum a turbine et pluuiis.’ [425] Sic Isaie 61.: ‘Solem nube tegam.’ Hec est fides, de qua Luce 1.: ‘Spiritus [426] sanctus obumbrabit tibi’ etc.”

WA 55, II, 443, 279 – 444, 286: “[279] 3, 469 Sic Ecclesia, luna spiritualis, ‘auferetur’, Quando secundum corpus [280] fulgebit sicut sol, Et secundum animam, qua iam fide fulget, fulgebit in [281] clara visione Dei. Quę visio excedit fidei claritatem septies et amplius. Interim [282] autem, donec Est media parte sui (i. e. secundum spiritum per fidem) [283] clara, que est radius a sole Christo in eam descendens, Et altera [284] parte sui (i. e. secundum corpus) obscura, semper oritur Iustitia et abundantia [285] pacis. Sic enim I. Corin. 13.: ‘Cum venerit, quod perfectum est, euacuabitur, [286] quod ex parte est.’”

The comparison of sevenfold clarity here probably is a reference to the distinction between fullness and participation, as discussed in the previous chapter, not to a directly calculable degree of difference.

<sup>815</sup> WA 55, I, 597 gloss 2; WA 55, II, 668, 24-34; WA 56, 298, 21 – 299, 26; WA 57, b202, 8-18. See also WA 55, I, 240, 3-8; WA 55, II, 253, 370 – 254, 391. On the symbolism of veils see also Schwarz 1962, 149.

letter is left behind and the spirit participated in more and more. This progression can be seen in how Luther compares faith to a movement and *transitus* from the temporal to the spiritual. Thus, as faith increases, one progresses closer to the heavenly glory, growing in the knowledge of and participation in spiritual things.<sup>816</sup> Nevertheless, throughout the entire progress through this chamber, which stands for the earthly life of a Christian, some things remain hidden behind the second veil. This hiddenness is caused by faith being penetrated by the humanity of Christ, which in faith partially obscures the divinity, as well as by the obscurity that stems from the flesh of the believer. This humanity even protects from judgment the sinful flesh, to which no light is admitted. It also serves as shadow and cover for the spirit which is not yet able to receive the intense light of glory. It shields both from the light which they cannot yet receive. Participation in the humanity of Christ even functions as a cover for the sins of the Christian with regard to God (i.e., as related to justification). The life of the Christian under the reign of grace and faith ends at the second veil, which is crossed through in the death of the carnal life and at the resurrection to future life.<sup>817</sup> Thus the three chambers of the Tabernacle represent the three stages of history and three modes of God's communion with the human beings: the Incarnation, faith which grasps the divine things internally in spirit, and the direct heavenly vision.<sup>818</sup>

As a stage pertaining to the Church Militant faith is therefore always connected to the humanity of Christ. The humanity of Christ is the beginning, the descent of God, which allows the Christian to enter into participation in Christ as God, but which is also connected to the life of the Church as a whole. When a Christian ascends in faith to the knowledge of Christ as God, that knowledge remains at the same time connected to Christ as a man. The humanity always penetrates and covers the full knowledge of the divinity until the time when the Christian crosses the second veil into direct and full knowledge of God, where the shadow and protection formed by the humanity is no longer needed. Thus the humanity of Christ, in a sense, extends from the first veil (where it is the entrance and starting point) to the second veil (where it is the endpoint and terminus). At death, when the animal life (*vita animalis*)<sup>819</sup> connected to the carnal and bodily life ends, the Christian enters the purely spiritual life, to the direct admiration of God in the heavenly glory. The

<sup>816</sup> WA 55, I, 290 gloss 1; WA 55, II, 629, 7-10; 866, 45 – 868, 81; 971, 2296-2300; WA 2, 535, 26 – 536, 13; WA 57, b111, 2-8; b223, 1-14.

<sup>817</sup> AWA 1, 511, 11-14: "Et pulchre in isto versu definitio fidei describitur, quia est *lumen signatum super nos*. Quod ait *signatum*, indicat, quod sit signum et clausum adhuc novissimo velamen, licet sit *lumen* ad primum velamen."

WA 55, II, 335, 75-77: "[75] Bl 80 **Sanctum** spiritualiter Est Ipsa Ecclesia allegorice, Tropologice autem [76] Ipsa sanctitas fidei et Iustitię Spiritualis. Sanctum autem sanctorum est [77] Beatitudo futurę glorię, Sicut in tabernaculo Mosi fuit figuratum."

WA 57, b202, 8-18: "**Velum** primum, quod [9] erat ante sanctum, significabat absconsionem et fidem futurae Ecclesiae, [10] futuri evangelii et futurorum sacramentorum, non enim Synagoga [11] cernebat haec praesentia. Ideo in passione Christi hoc ipsum fuit 'scissum [12] a summo usque deorsum', quia tunc Ecclesia prodiit et Sinagoga desiit. [13] Secundum vero, quod fuit ante [sanctum] sanctorum, hanc nostrae [14] fidei absconsionem significat, in qua Christus homo regnat, quod similiter [15] auferetur, cum apparuerit in gloria. Sic cognoscimus Christum [16] P Bl. 114b (\*)secundum carnem et divinitatem, sed non nisi per fidem, ut 2. Cor. 4.: [17] 'Nos autem revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes' (scilicet per fidem) [18] 'transformamur in eandem imaginem a claritate in claritatem.'"

See also WA 55, II, 371, 491-426; 629, 8-11; 801, 68 – 802, 73; 1024, 279-293; WA 56, 277, 21 – 278, 5; WA 57, a55, 15-24; b105, 4-12; WA 2, 457, 20-33.

<sup>818</sup> WA 55, II, 253, 370 – 254, 393; 651, 186-198. See also chapter 2.3.3.3.

<sup>819</sup> On the difference between *animalis* and *spiritualis vita*, see chapter 2.4.1.2.

body of sin is left behind, and the Christian is no longer ruled and guided by the humanity of Christ, because he enters the reign of glory where Christ reigns with Father as God.<sup>820</sup> Compared to the light of faith, which is shadowed by the cloud of humanity, this clear vision contains a sevenfold brightness and clarity, because it has as its object the immediate admiration of God in his divine essence.<sup>821</sup>

In order to understand the nature of faith as the middle stage, one therefore needs to pay attention to the manner in which the situation of the Church as well as that of the individual Christian between the two *saeculi* reflect the principle of Incarnation, a principle which concerns also faith. By this principle I mean the connection of the humanity of Christ and the Incarnation to the stage of the Church Militant and the stage of faith. According to Luther, the Christian in the Church Militant belongs through faith to the kingdom of grace (*regnum gratie*), where Christ reigns through his humanity. Granted, Christ is possessed in faith as both man and God, meaning that the object of faith is his whole person, but the knowledge of him in his divine nature is still obscure and will be seen with full clarity only in heaven.<sup>822</sup> But at the same time, as we have seen, the knowledge of Christ means not only the salvific knowledge of his person, but that Christ rather functions as the access to the entire spiritual world. He is the light of faith in which

<sup>820</sup> WA 55, II, 1024, 279-293.

<sup>821</sup> WA 55, I, 352, 1-3; WA 55, II, 443, 279-281; 593, 90-96; 651, 192-195; 801, 71 – 802, 73; WA 57, a55, 15-24; b105, 3-12; b202, 13-15; WA 2, 457, 20-33.

<sup>822</sup> WA 55, II, 1024, 279-293: “Vocatur autem Ecclesia militans [280] domus David propter humanitatem Christi. Quia nunc regnat Christus in quantum [281] homo et per fidem humanitatis suae, quam habet ex David. Sed [282] in futuro tradet hanc domum Deo patri, Et ipse quoque subiectus erit [283] ei, qui subiecit ei omnia, Et erit domus Dei et regnum Dei, Vt iam non tantum [284] Christus homo in nobis, Sed et Christus Deus in nobis sit. Ideo enim [285] nunc participamus eum tantummodo, quia in humanitatis eius regno sumus, [286] que est pars Christi. Sed tunc totus Christus in nobis erit clare sine [287] Involucro humanitatis. Non quod nunc non sit Deus in nobis, Sed quod est [288] in nobis Involutus et incarnatus in humanitate. Tunc autem erit reuelatus [289] sicuti est. Nunc cognoscimus ex parte, tunc autem sicut et cognitus sum. [290] Nec quod humanitatem dimittet, Sed quod etiam diuinitatem suam ibi [291] latentem, quam nunc confuse et in enygmate humanitatis eius videmus, [292] ostendet clare. Interim itaque sumus domus David, Et Sedes sedent. Non [293] tantum autem, Sed et stant.”

WA 57, a55, 14-24: “[14] **Bl. 13 b \*A Deo patre et Domino nostro Iesu [1, 3].** [15] Hoc dicit ad differentiam regni gratie et regni glorie. Quia regnum [16] gratie est regnum in fide, in quo Christus in quantum homo regnat, rex [17] et Dominus constitutus super omnia, acceptus tamen a Deo patre secundum [18] prophetiam psalmi 8.: ‘Constituisti eum super’ etc. Et hoc usque ad [19] iudicium extremum, in quo secundum Apostolum 1. Corinthios 15. ipse [20] ‘tradet regnum Deo patri’ et erit ‘Deus omnia in omnibus’. Hoc est [21] regnum glorie, in quo Christus regnabit in quantum Deus, idem cum patre; [22] non quod sit aliud et aliud regnum, sed aliter et aliter, nunc in fide per [23] humanitatem Christi, tunc in specie per revelationem essentie Dei. Inde [24] apostoli semper fere appellant Christum ‘Dominum’, ‘patrem’ vero Deum.”

WA 2, 457, 20-33: “[20] Quid est autem, quod non sufficit Apostolo dicere ‘A deo patre [21] nostro’, nisi adderet ‘et domino nostro Iesu Christo’? Hoc dicitur [22] ad differentiam regni gratiae et regni gloriae. Regnum gratiae est regnum [23] fidei, in quo Christus ut homo regnat, constitutus a deo patre super omnia, [24] [Ps. 8, 7., Ps. 68, 19.] iuxta Psal. viij. In quo a deo accipit dona in homines, ut Psal. lxxvj. dicit, [25] [1. Cor. 15, 24. 28.] et hoc usque ad iudicium novissimum. Tunc enim, ut i. Corin. xv. Apostolus [26] docet, tradet regnum deo et patri, et erit deus omnia in omnibus, cum [27] evacuaverit omnem principatum et potestatem. Hoc est regnum gloriae, in [28] quo deus ipse per se, non amplius per humanitatem regnabit in fidem, non [29] quod aliud et aliud sit regnum, sed aliter et aliter, nunc in fide et enygmate [30] per humanitatem Christi, tunc in specie et revelatione divinae naturae. Inde [31] Apostoli fere appellant Christum dominum, patrem vero deum, cum sit idem [32] deus uterque, sed, ut dixi, propter regni differentiam, quod sumus nos, qui [33] in fide purgamur, in specie autem salvi erimus.”

See also Vind 2010, 29-30.



all creation is seen as pointing to God, the light which Luther defines as an immediate and direct knowledge of God.<sup>823</sup> Although at the same time this knowledge is internal and hidden, nevertheless it is in its essence divine intellectual light, which makes Christ present in the soul. The question therefore becomes, how should the nature of this light be understood with regard to Luther's statements concerning the connection of faith and the humanity of Christ? The answer seems to be that there are two aspects according to which Christ rules in the Church. In the Psalm Commentaries Luther connects the relationship of the reign of grace and reign of glory to the concept of Christ as *king* and Christ as *God*. While interpreting Ps. 2:6 in the *Operationes in Psalmos* as speaking about the rule of Christ in the Church as king, Luther emphasizes the dual nature of the Church. The Church has been founded and instituted in a concrete event and at a concrete place by the sending of the Holy Spirit, but it has spread to the whole world so that it is no longer restricted to any place, but transcends place. In this way the concrete mountain of Jerusalem is transformed into the spiritual Zion, the "mirror" or "watch-tower" (*specula*), in which the heavenly things are speculated or looked at from afar through faith, in the spirit. Christ as man and God unites the temporal and the heavenly things, drawing the believers to him by his word.<sup>824</sup> In this drawing and passover (*transitus*), he rules as king when he carries the Christians away from themselves, and as God when he receives and fills them with divine goods. The first condition, drawing away, is connected to the mortification and cross, the latter to the glorification.<sup>825</sup> Therefore, that which applies to the Church in general is also applicable to the faith of an individual. Both require a concrete starting point; faith requires the external word or sacraments. But this starting point functions as the access or entrance through which one is drawn to the embrace of spiritual and invisible things.<sup>826</sup>

However, this transition is not instantaneous and total but incipient and growing. Therefore the humanity of Christ, which in the light of faith interpenetrates his divinity, functions with regard to the flesh and the old man as a covering, by which the divine goods are hidden from the flesh. It also functions as a 'rod' or 'scepter' by means of which the flesh in its mortification is simultaneously ruled, straightened and forced to submit to Christ against its will. But with regard to the spirit, it functions as a veil which admits more and more light as the Christian passes over from the flesh to the spirit and partakes more and more of the divine goods which fill him with joy. Thus there is a complex interconnection between Christ and the Christian. Here Luther quotes a maxim of Augustine (de Trin. III, 4): that which is simple in Christ corresponds to a twofold reality in us. Thus the passing over of Christ in the flesh to Heaven represents in us a passing over of both our flesh (which is killed and finally made spiritual in the resurrection) as well as well as of the spirit (which is gradually made more alive and receives more divine light).<sup>827</sup> The relationship of the humanity and divinity of Christ in the light of faith

<sup>823</sup> See chapters 2.3.3, 3.3.1.1 and 3.3.2.1.

<sup>824</sup> AWA 2, 84, 4-19; 86, 5 – 87, 19; 88, 18 – 89, 13. See also AWA 2, 82, 1 – 83, 6; 139, 6-14 and Wright 2010, 120-121.

<sup>825</sup> AWA 2, 225, 7 – 227, 14. On the dual effect of Christ and his word, see also chapter 2.4.2.1.

<sup>826</sup> This demonstrates the nature of the Church as the nexus of the the worlds and the two creations, the visible and the invisible. See chapters 2.3.2 and 2.3.3.

<sup>827</sup> WA 57, b223, 1-14: "Introitus autem coeli per mortem Christi sacramentum [2] est nostrae quoque novae vitae et viae, qua coelestia tantum quaeramus [3] et amemus toto prorsus affectu ingressi in coelestia,

therefore is connected to the nature of Christ as man and as God, to him as incarnate and as resurrected, to his work as being simultaneous mortification and glorification, as well as to the relationship between the spirit and the flesh in the human person and the diverging effect of the work of Christ on them.

In the beginning of this main chapter we raised a question regarding the difference between the heavenly vision in the light of glory and the vision of God in faith. We saw that the views of Augustine and Bonaventure received criticism for ontologism, that Thomas solves the problem by defining the light of faith as impressing in the mind species which have a mediating function between the light of faith and light of glory, and that Nominalism deals with the issue by differentiating between intuitive and abstractive cognition. For Luther one aspect of the difference between the light of glory and light of faith lies in the nature of the light of faith as partial knowledge and light of glory as perfect knowledge. The second aspect which differentiates between the two lights is the connection of faith with the humanity of Christ. In faith, God is not grasped *apart* from the humanity of Christ, although faith can entail partial and immediate knowledge of the divinity itself. This knowledge in faith of the divine nature nevertheless remains enigmatic, and is differentiated from the heavenly vision by the way in which it is obscured and interpenetrated by the humanity of Christ. What is clear is that Luther is not speaking here about the presence in faith of the concrete, local human nature of Christ, although the concrete external things function as a starting point of faith. But to the extent to which the humanity of Christ seems to be involved in the inhabitation of Christ in the Christian by faith, his humanity must be understood in terms of its assumption in the hypostatic union and the communication of attributes (*communicatio idiomatum*), through which it has become spiritual and free of the constraints of circumscribed locality. It is nevertheless effective and present only in those who believe, by faith. That is, this mode of presence is not identical with God's omnipresence. Regarding the presence of this 'spiritualized' humanity in Christians, Luther states:

**The Lord is in them in Sinai.** First: Christ is in the holy ones in Sinai; i.e., according to the assumed humanity **in the holy place** i.e., in their hearts or spiritually, as if he said: Now he is not in them through his humanity in the way (*sicut*) he was before his Passion in various profane places without difference and among the impious Jews, nor in any place defined as spatial body, as any profane thing is, but he is 'in them in a holy place', i.e., as if to say: in a holy way or spiritually, when he is borne in their bodies and hearts by faith and the virtues. Second: 'In them in Sinai' i.e., in them who are in Sinai, but 'in the holy place', as if he indeed is in them who are in Sinai, as in the ancient times he was literally in

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ut sit 'conversatio [4] nostra' iuxta Apostolum 'in coelis'. Huius mysticae et exemplaris passionis [5] Christi Paulus ferme per omnes epistolas plenus est, ut ad Rom. 6. [6] et 8., Eph. 4., Col. 3., Philip., et ubicunque docet de mortificando vetere [7] homine et renovando interiore. Igitur quod Christus egit secundum [8] carnem tantum (non enim aliquando transiit a vitiis sicut nos, sed [9] semper fuit et est in coelis, sicut Iohan. 3.: 'Nemo ascendit in coelum [10] nisi filius hominis, qui in coelis est'), per hoc simplo suo concinit duplo [11] nostro. Ut ait Augustinus lib. 3. de trinitate cap. 4.: Nos enim carne et [12] spiritu transimus, Christus autem carne solum transiit. Ideo transitus [13] carnis nostrae exemplum est (quia similes ei erimus), transitu autem [14] carnis Christi significatur tamen velut sacramento transitus spiritus."

the profane Sinai, but now he is in the holy and mystical Sinai, i.e., in the Sinai of the Church, in which they are.<sup>828</sup>

In theory it is possible to translate the words *iam non est in eis per humanitatem, sicut erat ante passionem* as “now he is not in them through his humanity, as he was before his passion” and not “in the way he was”, i.e., denying the presence of the humanity of Christ. However, the previous sentence which states that Christ is in the holy place according to his assumed humanity, i.e., “spiritually”, confirms that Luther is indeed speaking about the humanity of Christ, which is present now in the faithful: not in a spatial mode, but in a spiritual mode. “Spiritual”, therefore, is not the opposite of “humanity”, but Luther does indeed refer to a spiritualized humanity of Christ. (The term “spirit” in the human being also implies some kind of nexus between God and man, where both meet). This reading clarifies how Luther can emphasize that Christ rules in the Church by means of his humanity without this coming into conflict with the numerous passages in which he speaks of the immediacy of the light of faith. The humanity of Christ does not only mean “Christ the crucified” as an historical object (as that would be the letter, not the spirit). It is, rather, an object of faith in which the believer actually participates, because Christ is present in faith both as man and God through his spiritualized humanity.<sup>829</sup> Luther even refers to the glorified humanity of Christ as an *abstractum* (i.e., some kind of universal) in which believers participate by faith, thereby becoming its *concretum*.<sup>830</sup> Unfortunately, he does not explain the underlying metaphysics further. Attempting a thorough explanation of Luther’s idea here would probably be against Luther’s own theological intentions: he emphasizes that the mode of the union of the natures in Christ is incomprehensible. Luther approaches this relation primarily by means of a series of typologies and images taken from the mystical tradition, such as the three chambers of the Tabernacle, the two veils, and the image of the cloud. He also states that the difference between the two lights is that the light of glory is brighter, the light of faith dimmer; and that the humanity is comparable to darkness or shadow which makes the light of faith dim as it contains both elements. The brightness of the lights thus seems to be associated with an ontological hierarchy akin to the metaphysics of light of Bonaventure, in which the brightness of the light represents its degree of being.<sup>831</sup> This appears to be the most fundamental

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<sup>828</sup> WA 55, II, 376, 574-584: “[574] **Dominus in eis in Sinai.** Primo sic: Christus in sanctis illis In Sina [575] i. e. secundum humanitatem assumptam **In sancto** i. e. in cordibus eorum, [576] siue spiritualiter, q. d. iam non est in eis per humanitatem, sicut erat [577] ante passionem indifferenter in locis prophanis quibuscunque et inter impios [578] Iudeos nec loco corporaliter amplius definitus, sicut quilibet res prophana. [579] Sed est ‘in eis in sancto’ i. e., vt sic dicam, Sanctiter siue spiritualiter, [580] quando in corpore et corde eorum portatur per fidem et [581] virtutes. Secundo ‘In eis In Sina’ i. e. qui sunt In Sinai, Sed ‘in sancto’, [582] q. d. Est quidem in eis existentibus in Sina, sicut olim fuit ad literam et in [583] prophano Sinai, Sed in Sinai sancto et mystico, i. e. in Ecclesiastica Sinai, [584] in qua ipsi sunt.”

<sup>829</sup> See WA 55, II, 494, 141 – 495, 147, where Luther emphasizes that the Church possesses Christ simultaneously (*simul*) as man and God.

<sup>830</sup> See WA 55, II, 801, 48-50; 857, 147-155. The background of this idea in the history of dogma probably is the doctrine of Christ’s assuming the universal humanity, exemplified, among others, by Tauler in his Christmas sermons. The participation in Christ in faith therefore is not only participation in his divinity, but also participation in the glorified humanity of which he is the head and “*abstractum*”.

<sup>831</sup> On the metaphysics of light, see chapter 2.2.3. In Luther’s thought there is an analogy between Christology and metaphysics in general, as demonstrated by WA 55, 494, 141 – 495, 164.

explanation one can provide here for the issue how the two natures are related to each other as cognitive objects of faith.

The question about the mode of the presence of the humanity of Christ in faith also touches upon another interesting topic. Strictly confessional Lutheran circles have accused the Finnish School of Luther research of following the view of Anders Osiander condemned in the Formula of Concord. According to this condemned view, the inhabitation of the divine nature of Christ in the believer is the cause of his or her justification.<sup>832</sup> Some Mannermaa's writings may indeed have given cause for this accusation. One can also note in the present study that in Luther's early writings the divine nature of the light of faith is emphasized and treated in a much larger number of texts than its human nature. However, the discussion of Luther's texts presented in the present study shows that for Luther the light of faith is not only divine. The light has a Christological nature, so that the humanity of Christ is also present in that light, although the exact manner in which this spiritual presence of Christ's human nature is to be understood remains vague. Nevertheless, understood in this manner Luther's definition of faith and the manner of the inhabitation of Christ seems to escape most of the condemnations of the Formula of Concord.<sup>833</sup> Christ is not present in faith only in his divine nature, but as God-man.

### **3.4.3. Faith and the Conflict between the Spirit and the Flesh**

The previous subchapter examined how the light of faith is made enigmatic by the humanity of Christ. In addition, however, the light of faith is also obscured in Christians by their own flesh. Luther states that the light of faith and the natural light of reason are related to each other as darkness is to light. The spirit of the fallen person is completely in darkness, as Christ is not present in him, and without divine light the natural capacities cannot recognize the presence of God under opposites elsewhere, either. But for the Christian, Christ who is present in faith is a light for the new spiritual nature. However, the old nature and the flesh of the Christian do not perceive that presence, so in relation to

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<sup>832</sup> See e.g. Schumacher 2010; Vainio 2008.

<sup>833</sup> See FC Ep III; FC SD III. The analysis presented in this chapter shows that the inhabitation of Christ is not restricted to the presence of his divine nature, but embraces both natures. Thus objections 1 and 2 (FC Ep. III, 12-13; FC SD III, 60-61), which condemn the view that Christ is our righteousness according to one nature alone, do not apply. The Luther interpretation presented in the present study comes close to the view of Joachim Mörlin, who emphasizes that the content of inhabitation is the whole person of Christ both in his divine and human nature. On Mörlin see Vainio 2008, 119-127.

However, it is debatable whether this view satisfies objection 4 (FC Ep. III, 16; FC SD II, 63), according to which the view "That faith looks not only to the obedience of Christ, but to His divine nature, as it dwells and works in us, and that by this indwelling our sins are covered" is condemned. Although the question of justification is beyond the scope of this study, it can be observed that for Luther the relationship between the natures and the cognitive functions related to them seems much more complex than FC allows. It does indeed seem certain that for Luther it is not only the indwelling of the divine nature by which the sins are covered (i.e., from God). They are covered rather by the human nature of Christ, which Luther describes as a shadow and refuge, whereas the divine nature does not function as a covering, but as a light which among other things shows the sins of the human person. Moreover, according to Luther the light of faith shows the person of Christ and the justification in him, as well as purifies, justifies and gives the peace of the remission of sins (WA 55, II, 341, 94 – 342, 107; WA 2, 469, 7-20; AWA 2, 205, 1-14). The functions of the light of faith as a light which shows, and light which possesses that which it shows, cannot be separated, but they are ontologically connected to each other.

them that same light is darkness. This results in a cognitive conflict in the Christian, as a duality of opposite experiences exists in his person.<sup>834</sup> To complicate the issue further, Luther usually discusses only one cognitive aspect of faith (i.e., light or darkness) in a single passage. This practise of Luther's has resulted in conflicting interpretations of the cognitive nature of faith in previous studies, as usually only one of the aspects (i.e., either light, or darkness) has been taken into full account. In the Finnish research as well, which has accepted the notion of the union with Christ in faith, faith has often been described from only one perspective: either as a light, which knows God face to face, or as darkness, in which Christ is present secretly such that this presence remains completely unknown.<sup>835</sup> Therefore in order to form a complete picture of the cognitive nature of faith, both of these opposite aspects must be taken into account and related to the anthropological constituents which are the cause of the juxtaposition.

The previous chapters have examined the enigmatic nature of the light of faith from the points of view of the partial nature of the knowledge provided by it, the incomprehensibility of the divine nature, and the obscurity caused by human nature of Christ. The third aspect of the enigmatic nature of faith is caused by constitution of the human being. With regard to this third aspect, in the *Dictata* one can discern three reasons for why God can be said to be in a cloud or darkness. The first of these is that he is present by faith in the soul of Christians, where he descends. His presence is not visible to the outside, and even faith itself is shadowy and enigmatic because of the humanity of Christ. The second of these is God's hiddenness from wicked persons (i.e., unbelievers), who have not been humbled and brought to recognition of God by faith. The third is God's hiddenness even in the faithful from their sinful flesh, which is blinded, and does not recognize the affects which the inhabitation of God creates.<sup>836</sup> Thus, as we can see, the various aspects of the human being and his relation to God determine the degree to which and the manner in which God is known. For those who do not believe, God is completely covered in darkness. For those in whom God dwells, the flesh and the old nature remain in darkness. But for the soul (i.e., spirit)<sup>837</sup>, God is present in a shadowy manner in faith. Luther defines these different aspects of hiddenness and revelation in the *Dictata super Psalterium* by stating that:

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<sup>834</sup> The relation of the light of faith to different anthropological constituents is discussed in chapter 2.4. This chapter pays special attention to the question of how these constituents are interrelated in the same act of faith.

<sup>835</sup> See the introduction to the present study and the history of research in chapter 1.1.

<sup>836</sup> WA 55, II, 136, 7 – 137, 2: "**Caligo sub pedibus eius**, i. e. per fidem tantummodo [8] cognoscitur. Est expositio descensus Dei; pedes eius stant in anima, [9] Sed in fidei nebula et 'caligine'; tunc autem ascendemus ad eum in futuro [10] 3, 124 per speciem. | Nunc autem 'descendit' ad nos per fidem. Et iste primus [11] sensus. Secundo vt in glo[sa], Quod 'Caligo' operit impios, qui sunt [12] 'terra' et 'scabellum pedum eius', quando illustrat celos inclinatos. [13] Tercio 'Caligo' operit carnem peccati et execat, vt non videat concupiscibilia, [14] et Iacet 'sub pedibus', i. e. affectibus Dei, qui sunt Dei 'habitantis [1] in celis', i. e. animabus. Et istis sic factis et humiliatis animabus [2] 17, 11 et carne conculcata"

See also WA 55, I, 136, 10 – 138, 1; WA 55, I 136 gloss 13, which Luther refers to here. See also Schwarz 1962, 147-148.

<sup>837</sup> As discussed in chapter 2.4.1 Luther does not always differentiate between the soul and the spirit, especially not in the *Dictata*. The explanation for this is that they are of the same essence or nature, although the term spirit is usually used of the soul when it is concerned with divine things.

Note: Faith is a “cloud” for those who believe, or for the spirit, but “darkness” for those who do not believe, and for the flesh. This is because the unbelievers and the flesh in no way perceive those things that are of God, since for them all wisdom is foolishness. But believers and the spirit, even if they do not perceive clearly, still “know partially” as if in a “shining cloud”. In the same way also the Church itself is a cloud and darkness, as well as all every faithful person. Ps. 18 refers to this: “Day brings forth a word for the day, and night indicates knowledge for the night”, as both are the same thing.<sup>838</sup>

In another passage in the *Dictata* he comments on the same cloud:

Cloud and darkness is around Christ, and he himself is in the middle of the cloud that is in the soul, and in the middle of the darkness that is in the flesh. For the new man by faith receives the cloud, that is, a gloomy light, and by this the old man receives the darkness and is obscured in a beneficial way. Because when the spirit is illuminated, the flesh is blinded, the latter by justice and the former by righteousness. And so is the throne of Christ restored.<sup>839</sup>

The apophatic image of the cloud is here joined to different biblical images which represent God’s presence, and to the way the recognition of this presence differs with regard to different people and different anthropological constituents. For the spirit and the believers, Christ is present in a shining cloud or a pillar of fire which guides, protects and illumines. In this way Luther connects the notion of faith as a light to the enigmatic nature of faith caused by divine incomprehensibility and Christ’s humanity. It is not yet the clear light of the heavenly vision, but nevertheless a guiding and protecting light, making the presence of God known for the spirit. Still God is only known partially, and some things remain hidden as if behind the second veil or cloud.<sup>840</sup> But at the same time, for the flesh as well as for the unbelievers that same presence of Christ is darkness. For them it is the fearsome cloud in which God was hidden on Mount Sinai. Externally it represents the letter, the law, adversities and the corporeal humanity of Christ under which the presence of God is hidden. But when by faith this presence becomes internal, the cloud becomes the representation of the hiddenness of the presence of Christ for the old man.<sup>841</sup> This

<sup>838</sup> WA 55, I, 650 gloss 1: “GLOSSA:<sup>1)</sup> [1]Nota: fides Est ‘Nubes’ iis, qui credunt, seu spiritui, Sed ‘Caligo’ iis, [2]qui non credunt, seu carni. Quia Increduli et caro nullo modo percipiunt [3]ea, que sunt Dei, Sed est illis stultitia omnis sapientia. Sed Creduli et [4]spiritus, licet non clare percipiant, tamen ‘ex parte cognoscunt’ ac velut [5]in ‘nube lucida’. Eodem modo Et ipsa Ecclesia Est Nubes et Caligo et [6]quilibet fidelis. Vnde et psal. 18.: ‘Dies diei eructat verbum, et nox nocti [7]indicat scientiam’, cum sit idem vtrunque.”

<sup>839</sup> WA 55, II, 754, 14-19: “**Nubes et caligo sit in circuitu** Christi, Et ipse in [15] medio nubis, que est in anima, Et caliginis, que est in carne. Nam Nouus [16] homo per fidem accepit nubem, i. e. enygmaticam lucem, Et per hoc vetus [17] homo accepit caliginem et obscuratus est salubriter. Quia dum spiritus [18] illustratur, caro excecatur; hoc per Iudicium et illud per Iustitiam. Et sic [19] est sedes Christi correcta.”

The descent of Christ in the Incarnation, assumption of risen humanity, humbling of the proud and in sacrament of the altar all follow the same logic. See WA 55, II, 139, 3 – 140, 19.

<sup>840</sup> The image is based on the following biblical passages, among others: Math. 17:5; Exodus 13:21-22; Numbers 9:15-16. On faith as the shining cloud and pillar of fire, see also WA 55, I, 660, 1-3; 660 gloss 9; 814 glosses 5 and 7; WA 55, II, 548, 426 – 549, 449; AWA 2, 200, 3 – 201, 21; WA 5, 524, 27 – 525, 20. See also Schwarz 1962, 148-149.

<sup>841</sup> WA 55, I, 134, 7-9; 609 gloss 19; WA 5, 503, 4-34; 506, 26-34. On the distinction between the external and internal cloud, see chapter 2.4.2.2.

darkness and hiddenness on protects the flesh internally from the divine justice and splendor which it cannot receive. At the same time, it is the result of the inability of the flesh and the natural capacities to perceive the invisible and spiritual content of faith. Therefore it creates anguish in the old man. The old man does not understand how and where the person is being drawn by the light of faith, when the flesh is subjected by faith under the rule of the spirit.

The differing relations of the flesh and spirit to God and divine things can therefore be partially explained by the nature of the object of faith. On the one hand, Luther stresses the invisibility of the objects of faith. Christ is present spiritually and internally in faith. When faith functions as the theological intellect and understands the presence of God under visible objects, then as well the actual object understood by the theological intellect is the invisible content grasped by faith. The senses and the natural reason connected to visible things cannot reach this invisible content. On the other hand, Luther also stresses the actual conflict between the light of faith and the light of nature. They are connected with their respective affects and notions of good, which are opposed to each other. Therefore it is unavoidable that the light of faith remains darkness to the light of nature. The light of faith not only is superior to the light of nature, but the light of nature itself must be diminished and driven out by the light of faith in order for the person to become spiritual.<sup>842</sup> This conflict concerns not only the beginning of faith, but all growth in faith, as each step in the infusion of faith is first experienced as anguish and darkness.<sup>843</sup> In this duality one can also see again the ontological hierarchy among the lights, as well as a hierarchy of capacities within the Christian. Luther compares the Christian subjected under this duality, to the moon which is partially (i.e., with regard to the spirit in faith) made bright by a ray from the sun (i.e., Christ), but which partially remains dark and

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<sup>842</sup> WA 56, 356, 17 – 357, 17: “[17] Bl. 92. \*Corol[larium]. [18] Frustra magnificatur ab aliquibus Lumen naturę et comparatur [19] Lumini gratię, cum potius sit tenebra et contrarium gratię. Vnde et A [20] Iob et Ieremia maledicuntur, quod sit dies mala et visio pessima, quod [21] Lumen statim post peccatum ortum est, sicut Scriptum est: ‘Et aperti [22] sunt oculi eorum’, Genes. 3. Gratia enim sibi preter Deum nullum [23] statuit obiectum, in quod feratur et tendit; hunc solum videt, hunc [24] solum querit et in omnibus intendit cęteraque omnia, quę in medio sui [25] et Dei videt, quasi non videat, transit et in Deum pure dirigit. Hoc [26] est ‘cor rectum’ et ‘spiritus rectus.’” [27] Natura vero preter seipsam nullum sibi statuit obiectum, in quod [28] feratur et intendat; se solum videt, querit et in omnibus intendit, Cęteraque [29] omnia, ipsum quoque Deum in medio, quasi non videat, transit [30] et in seipsam dirigit. Hoc est ‘cor prauum’ et ‘iniquum’. Sicut gratia [1] Deum statuit in loco omnium, que videt, etiam suiipsius, et prefert sibi [2] solumque ea querit, que Dei sunt, non que sua sunt: Ita Natura econtra [3] seipsam statuit in locum omnium et in locum etiam Dei solumque ea [4] querit, que sua sunt, non que Dei. Ideo Idolum est ipsa sibi primum et [5] maximum. Deinde et Deum sibi transmutat in idolum et veritatem Dei [6] in mendacium, tandem omnia creata et dona Dei. Gratia in omnibus, [7] que videt, non est contenta, nisi Deum in illis et supra illa videat [8] et in gloriam Dei omnia esse, videri, operari velit, optet et gaudeat. [9] Natura contra omnia, que videt, nihil esse putat, nisi in sua commoda [10] veniant et sibi sint et operentur. Tunc autem ęstimat ea, si in [11] suam fruitionem et vsum et bonum ea perduxerit.[12] Hęc est fornicatio spiritualis et iniquitas et curuitas nimia valde. [13] Non ergo Lumen, sed tenebre rectius vocari potest ista prudentia, Nisi [14] quis ideo Lumen appellet, quia videt illa et cognoscit per rationem et [15] sensum, Alioquin quoad affectum, quo illa cognita sibi inflectit, verissime [16] tenebrę sunt. Nec potest aliter ex natura sua nisi sibi inflectere. Deum [17] enim et legem eius diligere non potest, Vt hic Apostolus dicit.”

See also WA 55, II, 722, 134-142; WA 57, b143, 7 – b144, 12 as well as chapters 2.4.1.1, 2.2.4.2 and 3.3. The same idea is expressed by Schwarz 1962, 384-385.

<sup>843</sup> AWA 2, 283-321; WA 56, 379, 1-17; WA 57, b79 gloss 3. See also chapter 2.4.2.1.

obscure.<sup>844</sup> The flesh and the natural capacities are ontologically more distant from God than the spirit, which receives the divine rays. They cannot recognize the divine light, and the natural light of the reason cannot comprehend it. Only the spirit, illuminated by the divine light, can be made receptive to it and become able to recognize it. But even then (in Christians as well) the light remains incomprehensible to the lower natural capacities. These are oriented only to sensible things.<sup>845</sup>

This opposite relationship of the spirit and flesh to the light of faith and the presence of Christ in faith can be observed in a number of Luther's texts. In faith the Christian is made to conform more and more to the image of Christ. However, because this image is connected to invisible spiritual goods and is opposed to visible carnal goods, faith and all progress in it cause suffering for the flesh. Likewise, the flesh does not understand the self-giving love stemming from participation in spiritual goods in faith, and resists it. It does not experience or understand the spiritual reality upon which the person relies in faith, nor the internal drawing and guidance which the spirit receives from Christ.<sup>846</sup> Therefore, both experiences (i.e., light as faith and darkness, resistance of the flesh and comfort of the spirit) take place simultaneously in the same person.<sup>847</sup> Because of this dual relationship of the spirit and the flesh to spiritual reality, the objects in which God is hidden under opposites and through which he acts (e.g., the word of God, sacraments and the Church) also have a dual effect on the Christian. They bring joy and comfort for the spirit, which grasps Christ hidden under them. But they bring suffering for the flesh, which does not understand the spiritual content and which receives their crushing external effect.<sup>848</sup> Because of this conflict Luther describes the cognitive nature of the presence of Christ in faith in terms of such paradoxical opposites as in the following:

That in the Holy of Holies there was no light signifies that God is present in the Church by the faith of Christ in their hearts, which does not comprehend and is not comprehended, does not see and is not seen, but still sees all things. It is a powerful proof of present but not visible things.<sup>849</sup>

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<sup>844</sup> WA 55, II, 443, 279, 444-286: "Sic Ecclesia, luna spiritualis, 'auferetur', Quando secundum corpus [280] fulgebit sicut sol, Et secundum animam, qua iam fide fulget, fulgebit in [281] clara visione Dei. Quae visio excedit fidei claritatem septies et amplius. Interim [282] autem, donec Est media parte sui (i. e. secundum spiritum per fidem) [283] clara, quae est radius a sole Christo in eam descendens, Et altera [284] parte sui (i. e. secundum corpus) obscura, semper oritur iustitia et abundantia [285] pacis. Sic enim I. Corin. 13.: 'Cum venerit, quod perfectum est, euacuabitur, [286] quod ex parte est.'"

<sup>845</sup> On the restrictions of the natural capacities and the way they are connected to the concepts of the old and new man, the spirit and the flesh, see chapter 2.4.1.

<sup>846</sup> See e.g. WA 55, II, 626, 402 – 627, 412; 971, 2287-2300; 972, 2321 – 973, 2348; WA 56, 57, 13 – 58, 18; 127, 3 – 128, 12; 329, 17 – 330, 5; 392, 17 – 393, 20; WA 2, 535, 26 – 536, 13; 570, 5-20; WA 57, b143, 7 – b144, 12; b186, 13-33.

<sup>847</sup> See e.g. WA 56, 344, 23 – 345, 2; 409, 13 – 410, 19. See also chapter 2.4.2.3.

<sup>848</sup> See e.g. WA 55, I, 608 gloss 14; 630, 7 – 632, 2; 704, 21- 706, 1; WA 55, II, 123, 18 – 124, 20; 717, 542-557; 848, 214-224; 904, 383-388; 926, 1039 – 927, 1051; AWA 2, 97, 12 – 98, 8; 101, 1-8. See also chapter 2.4.2.2.

<sup>849</sup> WA 5, 506, 12-16: "[12] Quod enim in sancto sanctorum nullum fuit lumen, significabat, inhabitante [13] Ecclesiam suam deo per Christum fidem esse in cordibus eorum, quae nec [14] comprehendit nec comprehenditur nec videtur nec videtur et tamen omnia [15] videt. Est enim argumentum rerum valde quidem praesentium, sed nequaquam [16] apparentium."



The text continues by elaborating on this presence, comparing it to a daybreak, among other things.<sup>850</sup> One can see in this passage all the defining characteristics of faith as cognition.<sup>851</sup> In addition, the juxtaposition here is clear. God is present in faith in the hearts of believers, and with regard to spirit and the internal man, faith sees all things. But with regard to the flesh, this presence does not appear, is not comprehended and does not comprehend: it is nothing apparent or visible. For the flesh it is mere darkness, although at the same time for the spirit it is a light guiding and making the presence of God known. Therefore one can conclude, that faith itself also corresponds to Luther's general idea of God being present under opposites. In faith God is hiddenly present under the body of the Christian, as well as hidden in the spirit from the external man and the flesh (i.e., the old nature, which is turned away from God and the spiritual reality).

### 3.5. Faith as Beliefs and Trust

#### 3.5.1. Acquired and Infused Faith

In previous chapters (3.2 - 3.4) we constructed a theory of Luther's understanding of faith based on a distinctly realist epistemology which defines faith in terms of divine illumination. The reservations we have expressed regarding faith as the intermediate stage do not undermine the Platonist epistemology behind this theory. They only limit and define its scope in relation to the ultimate knowledge of God in heavenly glory. In terms of this theory faith, first of all, is defined as immediate and direct (even though partial and enigmatic) knowledge of the object. In this sense the content of faith is not conceptual (e.g., revealed truth propositions), but is intuitive and facial knowledge of an object present to the mind that can be described as knowledge by acquaintance. In this regard, any conceptual content of the faith is secondary, although such content has an important (even necessary) role in the external means of grace which are required for the creation and sustenance of faith. But even in the act of the creation of faith, the conceptual content of faith works as a covering for and a vehicle of Christ. In itself, it is an external sign, requiring the internal act of faith in order to be understood properly with regard to its proper content: Christ. Moreover, when faith is defined as direct cognition, the definition does not appear to leave much place for the aspect of trust. Granted, one can find room for trust in the cleft that still stands between the partial knowledge of God in faith and the full knowledge of God in heaven. For example, one can discern such room for trust with

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<sup>850</sup> WA 5, 506, 16-25: "Sicut Arca foederis erat praesentissime in sancto [17] sanctorum, non tamen apparebat, ita tabernaculum eius fuit in circuitu [18] eius, quia in medio sancti sanctorum ipse sedebat, quo significatum est, ut [19] [Ps. 46, 6.] ps. 45. dicit, Deum esse in medio Ecclesiae suae, ideo non posse eam [20] commoveri, quam et similes prophetias ex ea figura hauserunt. Non enim [21] deus in nobis regnat superficietenus, lingua et verbo, sed in virtute, nec sunt [22] [Röm. 10, 9.] stabiles, qui in lingua et verbo in eum credunt, sed 'qui corde credunt, iusti [23] sunt', in quorum medio ipse habitat. Hi sunt fortes et adiuvantur in [24] [Ps. 46, 6.] omnibus vultu dei (idest praesentia dei), ut ps. 45. 'Adiuvabit eam deus [25] vultu suo', seu mane diluculo, idest praesenti valde numine et ipso vultu." See the full text and translation at footnote 443.

<sup>851</sup> See chapter 3.3.

regard to predestination and the question of why God allows sin and evil.<sup>852</sup> Nevertheless, Luther's definition seems to exclude from faith many aspects, which in modern theology are often connected to the concept of faith, such as believing certain dogmas, or trusting in a person or in the content of revelation. When faith is defined as immediate cognition, such aspects do not constitute the essence of faith but are a kind of secondary consequences or results of faith.

There are specific passages in Luther's works in which Luther explicitly addresses the question of the relationship between faith as divine virtue (i.e., infused cognition of an object present for the mind) and faith as an acquired habit (having as its object the external word as understood by means of human wisdom). In the *Disputation on Acquired and Infused Faith* (1520) and its resolutions, Luther begins the disputation with the statement that to receive the things promised in the sacrament, it is necessary to believe the promises.<sup>853</sup> At first glance this statement seems to point towards an interpretation stressing the content of the external promise as the content of faith. However, during this disputation Luther proceeds to state that it is exactly infused faith which is necessary for participating in the sacrament. Christ is the content of the sacrament, and he is apprehended only by the infused faith created by grace.<sup>854</sup> Thus in this disputation Luther sets against each other acquired faith (which he defines as a habit or act produced by human powers) and infused faith (created by the Holy Spirit).<sup>855</sup> He states that "Acquired

<sup>852</sup> See e.g. WA 56, 182, 14-31.

<sup>853</sup> WA 6, 88, 31 – 89, 12: "[31] Primo, ubicunque est verbum Dei promittens aliquid homini, ibi necessaria [32] est fides hominis, qui credat hanc promissionem esse veram et implendam [1] adeo certe et firmiter, ut potius omnem sensum, omnem rationem, omnem [2] scientiam, omnem contradictionem, omnem creaturam deberet negare quam [3] Dei verbo non credere. Quia qui verbo Dei non credit, Deum facit mendacem [4] et negat eius veritatem et peccat contra primum praeceptum. Sed in [5] omni Sacramento est verbum Dei promittens homini aliquid, ut 'Baptiso et [6] in nomine Patris, &c.' 'Immergo te et omnia peccata tua', item 'Absolvo [7] te, &c.' 'Remitto tibi peccata tua, &c.' Ergo in omni sacramento necessaria [8] est fides certissima de promissione Dei &c. [9] [Röm. 4, 3.] Secundo probatur Autoritate Rom.4. Abraham credidit Deo promittenti [10] sibi filium, et reputatum est ei ad iusticiam. Quod Apostolus dicit scriptum [11] propter nos, ut et nos credamus promittenti, ut iustificemur. Ergo necessaria [12] est fides."

<sup>854</sup> WA 6, 90, 22-27: "[22] Altera pars: Fides infusa sine acquisita est omnia, quia ipsa sola facit [23] omnia et est in omnibus bonis caput et vita: videtur in exemplis quae [24] [Hebr. 11, 1 ff.] Hebr. XI. adducuntur. Unde et Christiani appellantur fideles a fide tanquam [25] [Hebr. 11, 6.] a forma et natura et proprietate sua. Sine fide enim impossibile est placere [26] Deo. Quare fidem esse in omnibus operibus quae placent necesse est, ac [27] per hoc necessaria est etiam ad sacramentum accessuro."

See also WA 6, 97, 4-36.

<sup>855</sup> The concepts of *fides infusa* and *fides acquisita* especially bear Franciscan connotations. One of Luther's points in the disputation seems to be to reject the *via moderna's* concept of acquired faith as sufficient and necessary for justification. Scotus defines infused faith as an additional virtue which God does not require for justification, but which could incline the intellect to accept theological truths not known by pure reason (see p. 168 of the present study). Hägglund 1955, 55-59; 71-76 analyses the disputation and shows, that Luther's use of the concept stands in complete contrast to that of Biel and other Nominalists, for whom infused faith is not necessary. According to them, even if infused faith does exist, it must be complemented by acquired faith, as infused faith concerns only the *fides qua*, but is devoid of content without external teaching. However, Hägglund is wrong in reasoning that through his rejection of the Nominalist interpretation Luther rejects the medieval interpretation of infused faith in general. The distinction made by Luther between the two types of faith, as well as the concept of infused faith as a divine light, especially echo Bonaventure's understanding of the infused virtues. See Guardini 1964, 57-60 and White 2001, 347-350. This is consonant with Luther's positive reception of the Platonic tradition in general, as discussed in chapter 3.2. For a thorough analysis of the reception of the concept of infused faith in older Luther research and of infused faith as the faith of a baptized child, see Huovinen 1997, especially pages

faith is nothing without infused faith, infused faith without acquired faith is everything”.<sup>856</sup> Acquired faith can be likened to foam and surface decoration. It appears as opinions or a kind of display (*species*) and can simulate the infused faith externally, but only when it is not tested in tribulations.<sup>857</sup> Its object is the same word of God, but as understood without grace, so that the quality of the word remains unknown and it is changed into foolishness.<sup>858</sup> True faith, on the other hand, perseveres and necessarily does good, because it is participation in the living divine Word.<sup>859</sup> Infused faith in itself is sufficient to teach the Christian internally: Luther refers in this context to a baptised infant who is captured by the Turks. As a living and spiritual thing, infused faith necessarily brings forth both good works and correct opinions concerning God. It is better than any

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123-141. See also the analysis of the divine character and unity of the infused virtues presented in Schwarz 1962, 38-42.

<sup>856</sup> WA 6, 85, 7: “[7] 2. Fides acquisita sine infusa nihil est, infusa sine acquisita est omnia.”

The same text is found in the resolutions to the disputation at WA 6, 89, 27-28.

<sup>857</sup> WA 6, 89, 26 – 90, 21: “[26] **CONCLUSIO SECVNDA.** [27] Fides acquisita sine infusa nihil est, infusa sine acquisita [28] omnia est. [29] [Ps. 116, 11. 39, 6.] Probatur primo: Quia omnis homo mendax et universa vanitas omnis [30] homo vivens. Quare omnis generis opus extra gratiam Dei peccatum est. [31] Sed Fides acquisita est habitus vel actus, ut dicunt, humanis viribus paratus. [32] Quare ipse vanus et mendax est. Nam in hoc concordant etiam Doctores [33] scholastici, quod virtus vel opus extra gratiam non sit meritorium et malum. [34] Sed fides acquisita est virtus natura acquisita et naturaliter operans: quare [35] prorsus nihil est ad sacramentum vel gratiam sacramenti assequendam. [36] [Röm. 4, 3.] Secundo, Fides Abrahae Rom. 4. nobis in exemplum posita non potest [37] de acquisita intelligi, sed de infusa per Spiritum sanctum. Alioquin Pauli [1] tota Epistola corrueret, in qua negat et destruit, aliquem ex operibus suis [2] iustificari. At fides acquisita est inter opera nostra propria citra gratiam. [3] Cum ergo nos sicut Abraham credere oportet, sequitur, quod fide infusa et [4] quae hominum operibus ant viribus non habetur credere oportet. [5] Tertio Rom. 14. ‘Omne quod non est vex fide peccatum est’ necessario [6] de fide infusa loquitur: ergo fides acquisita peccatum est, quia non est ex [7] fide infusa propter accidens, quia si non, tunc sequitur, quod fide infusa [8] non esset opus, quia sine ipsa potest acquisita fides sine peccato esse, quod [9] est contra totam epistolam. [10] Ex quibus sequitur, quod fides acquisita est quasi hypocrisis, fictio et [11] simulatio et velut spuma fidei infusae. Sicut opera superbiorum bona et [12] vestimenta ovium, quibus lupi rapaces utuntur vel teguntur, apparent esse [13] bona, sed non sunt: ita fides acquisita apparet esse fides, sed est species [14] fidei et quasi opinio, imo non persistit in tentationibus nec est fundata super [15] petram. Patet ergo differentia fidei acquisitae et infusae. Quia acquisita [16] est valde similis fidei infusae, sicut omnia opera naturaliter bona sunt valde [17] similia operibus gratiae bonis, ut etiam a subtilibus hominibus vix discernantur, [18] sed in cruce probantur, quia tempore adverso natura cedit cum suis [19] operibus, gratia autem stabilis cor. Tunc inventur falsitas, vanitas et mendacium [20] [Ps. 116, 11.] naturae, operum suorum et fidei acquisitae, sicut dicit Ps. 115. Ego [21] dixi in excessu meo ‘omnis homo mendax’, &c.”

<sup>858</sup> WA 6, 96, 17-26: “Obiectum vero videtur [18] [Röm. 1, 25.] idem esse, scilicet verbum veritatis, sed non est. Quia sicut gentes mutaverunt [19] veritatem Dei in mendacium, ita et facit fides acquisita. Licet enim [20] [Luc. 18, 10 ff.] verbum Dei audiat idem quod infusa, sicut Phariseus in Euangelio eidem [21] Deo gratias agere visus est, cui publicanus confitebatur, et tamen vere non [22] egit gratias Deo, quia non talem cogitavit qualis erat, scilicet misericordem [23] in humiles, sed cogitabat Deum esse respectorem personarum, superbiorum, [24] divitum, potentum, atque hoc erat Dei veritatem in mendacium mutare: sic [25] facit fides acquisita et omnis notitia Dei humana, quia sola gratia facit vere [26] nosse Deum.”

<sup>859</sup> WA 6, 95, 6-19: “[6] Opera sequuntur iustificationem fidei infallibiliter, cum [7] non sit otiosa. [8] Sicut iam dictum est de operibus fidei, sic ad concupiscentiam carnis [9] sequuntur opera carnis sua sponte, sic etiam ad fidem spiritus sequuntur [10] fructus spiritus sua sponte. Carbo ab igne ignitus urit et lucet: ita cor a [11] verbo fidei per copulam immutatum facit bona opera. Et sicut nec concupiscentia [12] nec ignis potest esse otiosus, ita nec fides, cum sit non nisi divini [13] verbi participatio, quo semper movetur ad bonum, secundum naturam verbi: [14] quare non recte dicitur, quemquam iustificari per opera, sed rectius diceretur, [15] aliquem operari per iustificationem. Opera enim non faciunt bonum, sicut [16] nec fructus faciunt bonam arborem, sed fructum facit bona arbor et bonum [17] opus facit vir bonus. Vir autem bonus et arbor bona fit sine operibus per [18] solam fidem in veritatis verbum Dei, cui adhaeret, et adhaerens participat [19] veritate, iusticia, sapientia, bonitate verbi &c.”

external teachers.<sup>860</sup> An analogous text can be also found in the *Dictata super Psalterium*, in which Luther discusses the relationship between the faith of a heretic and faith of a Christian. According to Luther, the heretic has a literal and mortal faith lacking intimate power and spirit. By means of it he only has words with their grammatical signification. They are vain and empty, comparable to Christ without his divinity and the letter without the spirit. The theological signification given by living faith to the external words is the divinity in humanity, the spirit in the letter, the soul in the body, the life of things, honey in the honeycomb, kernel in the nut, etc.<sup>861</sup> Therefore, it is exceedingly clear that for Luther the grammatical, or conceptual, understanding of the external word (or dogmas) is not enough. For Luther, true Christian faith is faith infused by the Holy Spirit, faith, which becomes a living reality in the human person, guiding and educating him and producing good works. It is the living water which makes the tree good, so that the tree can bring forth good fruit and give shelter under its leaves.<sup>862</sup>

<sup>860</sup> WA 6, 91, 5-11: “[5] Quarto, fabula illa tertimonium est coecitatis eorum, quia dicunt, puerum [6] baptisatum et ad Turcas raptum, cum adoleverit, non posse credere, [7] nisi acquisita fides accesserit. Quis temeritatem istam ferat Christianus? [8] De gratia Dei ita loquuntur, quod esset opus naturae, quae indiget humano [9] adiutorio, cum ipsa sit Spiritus vivens ac movens ac nunquam quiescens. [10] Nam et parvuli baptisati non sunt otiosi. Opera autem eorum omnia placent [11] Deo, quia sunt in fide vivunt ac moventur.”

See also WA 2, 566, 28 – 567, 7: “[28] Illud quod ait ‘fides, quae per dilectionem operatur’, declaratio [29] est sermonum illuminans et intellectum dans parvulis, ut intelligamus, de [30] qua fide toties loquatur, nempe de vera et sincera atque, ut ad Timotheum [31] [1. Tim. 1, 5.] primo dicit, conscientia bona et fide non ficta. Ficta vero est, quam [32] Theologi nostri acquisitam vocant, tum quae, et si infusa est, sine charitate est. [33] Neque hic tracto frivolas quaestiones et rancidas opiniones eorum, [34] quibus statuunt fidei infusae necessariam fidem acquisitam, quasi spiritus [35] sanctus nostri egeat et non potius nos illius in omnibus. Nam quod somniant, [36] si puer recens baptisatus inter Turcas et infideles sine christiano [37] doctore aleretur, non possit scire, quae sint christiano homini scienda, nugae [38] sunt: quasi non cotidie ad sensum experiantur, quid prosit christiana doctrina [1] iis, qui non trahuntur intus a deo, rursum quanta fiant per eos, qui foris [2] non docentur tot et tanta quanta Theologi docent et docentur. Viva, immo [3] vita et res est, si spiritus doceat: scit, loquitur, operatur omnia in omnibus [4] quem deus docuerit, non secus certe quam dum creat hominem e novo. [5] Quis enim rude semen viri docet vivere, videre, sentire, loqui, operari et [6] totum mundum in omnibus operibus suis vigere? Ridicula sunt illa commenta [7] et de deo nimis stulte cogitantia.”

Luther’s conviction has a parallel in Gerson. See *Tractatus septimus super magnicat*, De mente veritates duodecim (DP IV, 333D-334A)

<sup>861</sup> WA 55, II, 893, 49-63: “[49] Imitantur autem Istos allegorice, Qui licet non abiiciant Christum [50] Bl 236 v neque fidem eius Sicut Iudei Neque negant eum aut fidem eius, \*tamen [51] veritatem fidei abnegant et veritatem Christi. Sicut Iudei Christum hominem [52] non negabant, tamen diuinitatem in Christo, que sola facit Christum [53] ex isto homine, tanquam si quis spiritum hominis neget, licet corpus eius [54] fateatur atque tamen contemnat, Ita heretici Viam fidei non negant, [55] tamen totam eius intimam vim et spiritum negant. Et habent fidem et [56] Euangelium mortuum ac literale; Ideo et ipsi sunt maculati in ista via [57] sua. Quia fides eorum in Christum est quidem via, Sed quia est mortua, [58] Et habent verba tantummodo quae nos habemus, sensum autem nostrum [59] contemnunt. Que verba vna cum grammaticali sua significatione sunt [60] velut Caro Christi sine diuinitate, litera sine spiritu, vana et vacua omnino. [61] Sensus autem verus in illis et theologica significatio Est velut diuinitas [62] in carne Christi, spiritus in litera, anima in corpore, Vita in rebus et [63] mel in fauo, Nucleus in cortice, Vinum in vase, oleum in lampadibus.”

<sup>862</sup> See Luther’s interpretation of the palm tree of Ps. 1 (AWA 2, 38, 17 – 52, 19).

### 3.5.2. Tribulations as a Test of Trust and Teacher of Faith

Nevertheless, there seems to be one instance in which faith as trust plays very significant role. This instance concerns the tribulations and afflictions (i.e., *Anfechtungen*, *tentationes*) experienced at the beginning and in the growth of faith.<sup>863</sup> As we have seen earlier in connection with analysis of Luther's understanding of the affective side of faith, Luther appears to hold that the content of faith is perceived as darkness by the intellect in the growth and beginning of faith, especially at its first infusion. The capacities of the person, especially his or her natural abilities, at that point do not yet grasp the spiritual reality: Christ, who is present in the objects of faith, and can illumine the intellect and guide the believer later, when he has been assumed in faith.<sup>864</sup> Therefore, there must always be suffering at the beginning of faith, because the human being is led to rely on a reality which he or she does not yet know, understand or recognize. The reason and senses, the capacities belonging to the natural man, do not understand it, because the flesh and the spirit are opposed to each other with regard to their objects, and in the beginning of faith the human being is merely flesh.<sup>865</sup> Therefore, the person must be consoled in some way by the external word and the Holy Spirit so that he or she can suffer the work of God. Only with this help can he or she withstand the anguish and be drawn into the dark cloud of the external word, sacraments and sufferings, inside of which Christ is present as the eternal Word, so that faith can be born.<sup>866</sup>

However, the same is to a lesser extent also true of all the consequent infusions of grace. Growth in faith and grace takes place by a similar process in which the Christian is being led to suffering which he or she does not yet understand. In this process patience, faith and trust in God are required, so that the person accepts the judgements of God without murmuring or blasphemy, giving praise and glory to God and considering God justified in his deeds regardless of whether he saves or damns. The Christian must not seek any external grounds for justification besides faith and trust in God. For example, the Christian must not try to conclude using natural reason or philosophical arguments, that he or she is (or is not) be predestined. Therefore, in tribulations faith has the character of a complete trust and surrender to God. The person must not seek to rely in tribulation on any merit or created thing beside God. The memory and experience of God's previous help can, however, support the Christian in tribulation: he or she can trust and believe that God, who has helped and delivered from the tribulation before, will also deliver him or her now. Because of this humility, confession, and faith, God will give his help. Afterwards, when the help has been received, the person will have even more faith, trust and admiration towards God. Thus faith has been tested by tribulation, and has grown because of it.<sup>867</sup>

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<sup>863</sup> These tribulations must be considered separately from the suffering that results from the ongoing conflict (treated in the previous chapter) between the flesh and the spirit in the Christian. In that conflict, the spirit by faith understands what is happening, even though the flesh does not. However, in the tribulation connected to the increase of faith even the spirit does not understand at first the content and the reasons of the tribulation. It does so only after the tribulation has passed and faith has increased.

<sup>864</sup> See WA 55, II, 962, 2027 – 963, 2059 and the analysis of this text at the beginning of chapter 3.3.2.2.

<sup>865</sup> WA 56, 379, 1-17; AWA 2, 106, 28 – 107, 19; 2, 139, 14-17; 140, 27 – 141, 3; 299, 20 – 300, 17.

<sup>866</sup> WA 56, 375, 1 – 378, 17; WA 57, b186, 13-33; AWA 2, 77, 1-8; 179, 15 – 184, 5.

<sup>867</sup> AWA 2, 137, 5 – 138, 29; 299, 20 – 30, 8; 309, 17 – 311, 2; WA 5, 622, 24 – 624, 3.

Moreover, Luther stresses that in tribulation the Christian does not understand what is happening and where God is leading him or her. On the contrary, in tribulation it seems that there is no conceivable help available and that all is lost. According to Luther, God will do his proper work under the hidden work in such a manner that his wisdom is found to be miraculous. That is, the way God delivers the Christian from tribulation is something that a human being could in no way himself come up with or conceive of. Tribulation is resolved only by divine wisdom. The prime example of God working in this way is God's action in the crucifixion of Christ, in which the most salvific act was hidden under something that at first appeared to be complete defeat. Regarding the concept of faith, the primary point here is that a person in tribulation does not yet see its outcome by the light of faith. Rather, such a person seems to be in complete cognitive darkness. He is being led somewhere he does not yet know or understand.<sup>868</sup> Experience and understanding come only after delivery, such that the wisdom and guidance of God in the tribulation is understood only after it has taken place.<sup>869</sup> Therefore, the intellectual aspect of faith is excluded during tribulation; on the contrary faith acquires a rather voluntarist quality. It becomes steadfast trust in God contrary to all that is experienced or understood, a trust based on the consolation of the Holy Spirit and the memory and experience of the previous saving work of God.

We can therefore say that tribulations constitute an exception to Luther's general understanding of faith, in which faith is connected to the intellect. The German existentialist approach to Luther comes closer to the truth in explaining the nature of faith in tribulations, a situation in which the will of the person suddenly is emphasized against the intellect and immediate experience.<sup>870</sup> The tribulations require patience and trust, as well as believing contrary to all apparent evidence that God is justified in doing what he does.<sup>871</sup> Luther also emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in granting perseverance in the midst of tribulations. Though he does not explain very clearly what the Holy Spirit precisely does in tribulation, the role of the Spirit seems to be linked to the affect. The internal consolation by the Holy Spirit can empower the person to withstand the external suffering in spite of the person not understanding what is happening. But although Luther emphasizes the role of the Spirit, his focus on the perseverance of the will in the middle of suffering leads to the question of whether his concept of faith in the midst of tribulations is in line with his rejection of the activity of the human being in justification, as so much weight is put on submission to the will of God. This apparent self-surrender, *Gelassenheit* and *resignatio ad infernum*, usually linked to Tauler, Gerson and Nominalist mysticism of will,<sup>872</sup> raises the question of whether Luther's conception of faith is completely coherent,

<sup>868</sup> WA 56, 375, 1 – 377, 2; AWA 2, 61, 6-16; 179, 15 – 182, 8; 318, 5 – 319, 3.

<sup>869</sup> WA 56, 377, 23 – 378, 2: “[23] Corollarium.[24] Semper ita fit, vt opus nostrum intelligamus, antequam [25] fiat, [26] Dei autem opus non intelligimus, donec factum fuerit, [27] Iere. 23.: ‘In Nouissimis intelligetis consilium eius’, q. d. In principio[1] seu primo nostrum intelligimus, Sed in vltimo Dei consilium intelligimus. [2] || Iohann. 14.: ‘Cum factum fuerit, credatis.’”

See also WA 55, II, 314, 143-145; 734, 109 – 735, 131.

<sup>870</sup> See e.g. Metzger 1964, 115-118.

<sup>871</sup> See Vind 2010, 33-35, where the certitude of faith is interpreted as the rare experience of joy that makes it possible to understand tribulation and despair as a positive act of God. However, in my opinion tribulations constitute an exception to the usual role of faith, not the other way around.

<sup>872</sup> See e.g. WA 56, 377, 23 – 378, 17; 388, 10-28; AWA 2, 301, 14-20; WA Tr. 1, 494, 24 – 495, 43 (977); 496, 7-16 (979).

or whether there are actually two conflicting tensions in his conception: The intellectualist Augustinian-Bonaventurean model explored in depth in this study (i.e., in which the will is captured by the divine good shown to it by the light of faith), and the Taulerian model (in which the self-surrender of the will in the face of divine judgement is the primary act of faith and justification), that is often seen as parallel to the Nominalist mysticism of love. Luther himself seems to hold that the suffering connected to tribulations ensures that the human person cannot have an active role in the justification: it is impossible for the old man to wish to suffer. However, if one approaches the tribulations from a more voluntarist and personalist point of view emphasizing the subjective experience and will of the individual, then the issue may appear to be precisely the contrary: It is the firm decision to endure suffering without complaint and to wait for divine deliverance, which justifies the person, just as he or she by this faith reciprocally justifies God in considering the actions of God in inflicting the tribulation justified. However, if one is able to weave the work of the Holy Spirit into the latter model to guarantee the passivity of the person in justification by attributing their patience to the consolation of the Holy Spirit, then there is no necessary conflict between the two models. The first model merely describes the normal state of faith, the second model describes the tribulations and infusion at the birth and increase of faith. In this relation one can also see the Trinitarian economy at work: in the birth of faith the Holy Spirit brings the human being to Christ, so that he or she can be illumined by faith.

However, the tribulations can also be understood in terms of ontological hierarchy. In the sense that the object of faith (God) exceeds human cognition, the light of faith can be said to shine from superior darknesses, i.e., the divine incomprehensibility.<sup>873</sup> When a person grows in faith, the process can be understood as a transition to a greater participation of the divine light. The knowledge being assumed is always at first incomprehensible (i.e., ‘darkness’). It becomes ‘light’ when it is subsequently comprehended, and the capacity of the intellect is ‘enlarged’ in the process. Thus the Christian progresses, passing over from the carnal into the spiritual and heavenly, from faith to faith, from clarity to clarity, ever closer to the cloud of incomprehensibility (i.e., the second veil), which separates the light of faith from the light of glory. In this process, the understanding of Scripture, dogmas and tribulations grows as the person becomes more and more able to understand their spirit and content.<sup>874</sup> Accordingly, the Christian also becomes more capable of teaching others. Therefore Luther can also describe this process in terms of progress from wisdom (*sapientia*), which means teaching given by others, to the understanding (*intellectus*) of its content and, finally, experience (*experientia*) or knowledge (*scientia*), when faith has been tested and strengthened by the experience of tribulation and delivery.<sup>875</sup> Thus, even though the proper content of faith is spiritual, and understanding it requires contact with that spiritual reality, it is nevertheless possible to convey it in an external sense by words and teaching. This teaching, however, is

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<sup>873</sup> See chapter 2.2.4.2.

<sup>874</sup> WA 55, II, 56, 19 – 60, 3; 490, 18-26; 910, 556 – 573; 913, 662 – 914, 733; 946, 1576 – 947, 1609; 974, 2376 – 975, 2403; 987, 2768 – 988, 2792; WA 56, 173, 9-18; 238, 28 – 239, 23; WA 2, 535, 26 – 536, 13; WA 57, b202, 8-18.

<sup>875</sup> WA 55, II, 921, 871 – 922, 903. In the passage Luther also discusses other gifts of the Holy Spirit, focusing on the virtues required for teaching.

not properly understood until it is experienced personally, when its content becomes living and effective. Moreover, even though the teacher cannot convey this internal experience and trust, he or she can give advice on enduring tribulation, which in its turn teaches internally how magnificent the content of the external word is.

Therefore one can conclude that for Luther the true content of faith is indeed the contact with Christ, the eternal Word of God, who is the content of the external word. This internal reality cannot be adequately described with words, but requires personal experience to be understood. Luther maintains that external teaching, moreover, is not absolutely necessary, as the grace received in baptism can internally teach the Christian a correct understanding of the contents of faith. In the normal situation, however, Christian teaching and proclamation is possible and required for the faith to be born and increased. However, the proper content of the proclamation is not deliverable as the external word, but as the internal word and the action of the Spirit, which adjacent to the external words teaches to understand them. The word of God is active and effective: it brings the old man into tribulations where faith is born, the content of the word understood, and the Christian begins to understand the word by his own experience. This understanding (*intellectus*) given by Christ is faith in the proper sense. However, in the process of the birth of faith the consolation of the Holy Spirit or consolation given by a wise teacher is necessary. It is required so that a human being under the action of the word, when it brings him or her into sufferings, can stand patiently and suffer the work of God in the creation of faith. During these tribulations the role of faith as trust (over against faith as understanding) is emphasized, because the content of the word is not yet understood. These tribulations also function to test, confirm and strengthen faith as trust, as the Christian can withstand them with the help of their previous experience of the work of God.



## 4. Conclusions

The aim of this dissertation was to investigate and clarify Martin Luther's understanding of faith and his understanding of reality in his biblical lectures between the years 1513 and 1521. The method of the study has been that of systematic analysis. Unless significant historical development was observed, I strove to represent the results as systematized summaries, first chapter by chapter and then in the final conclusions.

For the general rationale of the study we referred to the claim made by Pope Benedict XVI in his encyclical *Spe salvi*, where he sets against each other a Thomist definition of faith as a *habitus* in which the objects of faith are initially reality already present, and a supposedly Lutheran definition of faith according to which faith is only a subjective interior attitude, a conviction of things that are not yet present reality. We set ourselves the task of showing that this juxtaposition is incorrect, and that Luther actually sees faith as an even stronger participation in the divine reality than the notion of *habitus* is able to convey. We took as our starting point the thesis of the Finnish School of Luther research that Christ is present in faith, and that this union with Christ lies at the heart of Luther's teaching about justification. However, as we pointed out, simply citing the concept of union does not suffice to explain what faith is, and the question of the specific ontological or metaphysical nature of that union has remained open until now. A brief review of the research of the Finnish School concerning the relation of the ontological and epistemological aspects of faith demonstrated that the picture which emerges from the main studies of the school regarding the cognitive nature of faith seems quite unclear. Contradictory statements have been made, especially concerning the role of the human and divine natures of Christ and the question of whether the cognitive nature of faith can be described as a darkness in which Christ is secretly present, or as an ontologically divine light making the presence of God known. These questions, however, are not limited to previous studies, but arise from Luther's own writings.

Moreover, we proposed that the ontological nature of the union with Christ cannot be treated separately from the whole ontological substructure of Luther's thought and that Luther's whole theological cosmology or understanding of reality (*Wirklichkeitsverständnis*) has to be taken into consideration. This understanding includes the nature of God, the nature of the universe and the nature of the human being, and the way these are related to each other. Therefore we chose to undertake the research by first examining Luther's understanding of reality, which we did in the first main chapter (chapter 2), and then Luther's understanding of faith, which was done in the second main chapter (chapter 3). We furthermore stated that though the aim of this study is not historical explanation of the origins of Luther's thoughts, nevertheless the results of the present study are often compared with Luther's predecessors with the explicit aim of locating Luther within the wider metaphysical and epistemological traditions of Christian theology. It was the intention of this study to compare Luther especially with the theology of the so-called Augustinian School, in which the Platonist theology of Augustine was combined with ideas deriving from Pseudo-Dionysius. As the main representatives of this school we named Augustine, Bonaventure and Jean Gerson. This comparison was done with the aim of demonstrating, that Luther's concepts and arguments can best be

comprehended in relation to that tradition, and we stated that in this sense this work can also be viewed as an investigation in the history of ideas or dogma. With regard to most of its content, this study can also be viewed as a study of philosophical psychology.

In the first main chapter we analysed Luther's understanding of reality. In this task Luther's understanding of God, the universe, and the human being were examined. Through this it was sought to form a composite picture and bring the individual ideas into the context of the whole, as well as to analyse the general nature of Luther's cosmological system or understanding of reality these form together, which serves as the basis for understanding the nature of faith in Luther's theology.

With regard to Luther's understanding of God, we were able to see how Luther's idea of the Trinity as movement is based on the fundamental principle of God extending himself outside of himself in Christ while staying within himself, so that there is in God a unity of rest and movement, being and action. This principle manifests itself in Luther's understanding of the intra-Trinitarian and extra-Trinitarian birth of the Son, as well as in the way Luther understands the nature of the good in general. The idea of the continuous birth of the Son is reflected in the way Luther understands the participation of the Christian in God through Christ. The idea of God as the highest good follows the same line of thought, but explicated with the help of the Platonic view of the nature of the good. Luther is in explicit agreement with the Platonic principle of good: that it is in the nature of the good to spread itself. Especially in this context, Luther calls Christ the highest good (*summum bonum*). Luther associates this idea especially with the birth of the Son from the Father. In so doing he is connected to the Trinitarian theology introduced by Richard St. Victor through the fusion of Augustinian and Pseudo-Dionysian ideas, Trinitarian theology which continues in the thought of the Augustinian School (in the theology of Bonaventure among others). This tradition, in which the goodness of God is understood as the motivating principle of creation, stands in direct opposition to the Thomist understanding in which it is understood as the final end of creation. Luther's distinction between the two loves is associated with this difference.

The same inherent Christian Platonism can be seen in Luther's understanding of the divine nature as light, which in its primal unity is incomprehensible but which in Christ breaks out from the Father and is reflected in all creation: even to the point that all creation exists by participating in Christ. Furthermore, different stages of participation can be seen in Luther's thought, stages which reflect whether the creatures are turned towards the Creator, or away from him. Luther's understanding of the Creation as having been made in Christ the divine Wisdom, and pointing to him as its final cause also reflects the Neoplatonic principle of emanation and return. The priority of the invisible over the visible reflects an ontological hierarchy. Luther's idea of God as light, and of the universe as existing by participating in that light, are connected to the light metaphysics of the same tradition, the prime medieval exponent of which is Bonaventure.

With regard to the incomprehensibility and hiddenness of God, we saw a need to make a distinction between the two terms. Neither term constitutes a rejection of ontological thought. When it comes to the concept of incomprehensibility, Luther emphasizes the experiential nature of faith and the difference between the divine nature and all created things. The divine nature is incomprehensible because it is infinite and supereminent, and no higher principle can be set above it. Luther's remarks about the incomprehensibility of

the divine will may also evince Nominalist influence. Moreover, in his use of the concept of incomprehensibility Luther rejects the idea of ascent by negation, but describes the experiential nature of union with God in faith in terms of negative theology. Luther's understanding of God as hiding under contraries is connected to the Platonist idea of the divine nature uniting contrary things by divine wisdom, which is central in the thought of Bonaventure and the Victorines. In the analysis of this theme we even noted textual connections between Luther and preceding works of mystical theology.

The structuring principle of Luther's views concerning the universe is the difference between the visible and the invisible worlds. For Luther all visible things are fleeting and transient, signifying the permanent invisible spiritual things and above all, Christ. This signification can only be seen by means of intellectual light. However, we can note in Luther's theology a transition from a simple opposition of metaphysical properties towards a theological concept of dual hiddenness, in which the invisible spiritual good is not only opposite to the visible, but hidden under a contrary (i.e., an externally evil and undesirable) visible form. The two worlds of visible transient and invisible, permanent things thus stand in opposition to each other, but are brought together in the Church. In contrast to the visible works of the first creation, the Church and the things proper to it are theological signs in which invisible things are already hiddenly present under the visible exterior, thus forming the beginning of the second New Creation. In the Church, the Christian is transitioning from the visible world to participation in the invisible, from the Old Creation to the New. These two points form two perspectives from which the world can be viewed. From a carnal point of view, spiritual things are unreal and not present, but from the point of view of faith and the heavenly vision, carnal things are unreal and spiritual things real and present. The Church stands between the two, already possessing its eternal objects now, but not yet visibly. Luther describes the relationship between these three stages (i.e., the visible word, the Church as the middle stage, and the heavenly glory) with the help of the image of the tripartite Tabernacle. The works of God form three phases through which the human being transcends: from the visible world through the Church, into the invisible. In these works, a Platonic ontology is integrated with the Christian history of salvation. The underlying concept of the two worlds, visible and invisible, the concept of signification, as well as the three stages in which the participation of the spiritual reality increases, are related to a Platonic and Augustinian understanding of reality. The image of the Tabernacle and the concept of *transitus* Luther uses to illustrate this process again display connections to Victorine and Bonaventurian mysticism.

Luther's theological anthropology (i.e., his understanding of the human being) is divided into three interpenetrating structures: the natural constituents (body, soul, spirit); the qualitative anthropology (flesh – spirit); and the concept of the person, which unites the the first two. In the present study we first examined the natural composition of the human being and the development of the three-part anthropology (body – soul – spirit). Luther also illustrates this division with the help of the Tabernacle image. For Luther, the spirit is the highest part of the human being, dead and empty in the carnal person, but made alive by faith, which is the indwelling of God in the human spirit. Faith is a divine light received from God illumining the intellect, a cognitive light which makes this higher part alive. It constitutes the true intellect, the higher part of reason and the image of God in the human being, which alone is capable of grasping spiritual and intellectual things. The

concepts Luther uses to define it are derived from Augustine, Tauler and Gerson, among others. But for the lower capacities (i.e., senses and reason which belong to the body and the soul respectively), the light of faith as well as the presence of God in faith is cognitive darkness. The spirit is thus the part of the human being which determines the theological quality of the person before God, making him either dead or alive to God. The lower capacities cannot understand divine things. The tripartite natural composition of the human being thus forms the basis for the distinction Luther draws between the human being as carnal and the human being as spiritual: flesh or spirit. In faith, the human being can grasp the infinite goodness of God by his spirit and live a spiritual life (*vita spiritualis*) which leads to a love that desires to give good to others. Without faith, however, the human being is empty and carnal, and dominated by the lower parts. This results in a carnal love which desires to gather good unto itself, yet can never be satisfied by the finite created things it knows. Luther describes this life ruled by the lower constituents as animal life or the life of soul (*vita animalis*). The difference between the two lives and two loves is connected to their different objects (visible vs. invisible), different capacities (reason belonging to the soul vs. intellect of faith belonging to the spirit) and the different understandings of the nature of the good (Aristotelian vs. Platonic). The participation in the object of either kind (i.e., visible carnal good or invisible spiritual good) makes the human being respectively either carnal or spiritual. However, although for Luther a human being without faith is completely carnal, the Christian becomes completely spiritual only at the Resurrection. On this Earth, the Christian is simultaneously both flesh and spirit, there being a conflict between the two 'natures'. This conflict begins in the infusion of faith, which the old carnal nature experiences as darkness and anguish, but which the new spiritual nature created in the process experiences as light and pleasure. Luther describes this process of infusion with a number of images taken from mystical theology. The spirit wishes to serve the law of God and grasps the invisible spiritual things with the intellect of faith, but the flesh does not understand them and resists God's law of love. Therefore, there is an ongoing conflict in the Christian. Luther explains how it is possible for this conflict to take place within the same individual with the help of the Christological concept of *communicatio idiomatum*. The Christian person shares in both 'natures' of the flesh and the spirit, and likewise in their opposite affects and experiences. Thus faith can be at the same time both a light directing the Christian, and darkness which he resists. This idea also explains how there can be progress in which that the Christian becomes more spiritual, yet in spite of this progress, at the same time he remains *simul iustus et peccator*.

Our examination of Luther's understanding of God, the universe and the human being reveals that Luther's understanding of reality is related especially to the theology of the Augustinian School, represented by the Victorines, Bonaventure and Gerson, both in its use of single terms and images as well as a whole. We can see influences of as well other theological traditions: Aristotelianism and Nominalism, and German mysticism. But for the system as a whole, the following ideas are of central importance: the nature of the divine highest good as self-giving and as simultaneous being and movement; the nature of the divine light as the structuring principle of the universe; the contradistinction between the visible and invisible and their respective qualities, expressed in the creation; and finally the nature of the divine as uniting these contraries. Especially interesting in this

regard is the motif of being and understanding as participation in the divine light. This motif is seen in Luther's understanding of God as light, of the universe as participating in and reflecting the divine light and wisdom, as well as the true intellect of the human being (i.e., faith) described in terms of intellectual light. Created things, on their own, on the other hand, are contrasted to this light as being shadow and darkness. This difference forms the basis for Luther's use of many mystical expressions and images. Therefore, Luther's understanding of reality as a whole seems Platonist in the general sense of the word, and connected to the Augustinian School and its mystical representatives: the Victorines, Bonaventure and Gerson. Luther's own innovations especially concern theological anthropology: the radical opposition between the old and new man, nature and grace, as well as the Christological means of bringing these opposites together.

Luther's understanding of the nature of God, the universe and the human being, as well as the general nature of the system formed by these three and their relations, suggested that one should also attempt to examine his understanding of faith from the basis of a realist ontology and epistemology of Platonist nature. We saw how the concept of intellectual light is present in Luther's understanding of reality and in his theological anthropology. Therefore, in the second main chapter (chapter 3) we examined the concept of faith using the doctrine of divine illumination as the conceptual and dogmatic-historical basis. In this investigation we chose to follow especially the medieval Augustinian School, for which the epistemological doctrine of divine illumination is central. We distinguished between the interpretation that illumination only gives the human being a general capacity of abstraction, and the interpretation that illumination sets the mind into direct contact with the divine ideas. We also noted the question of ontologism, which if the latter interpretation of illumination is accepted, concerns the question of how illumination is distinguished from the beatific vision. Moreover, we distinguished between illumination as a general epistemological theory, and illumination as the basis of theological epistemology. As we saw, in the Early Middle ages illumination was accepted as a general epistemological theory. However, illumination was also connected to spiritual experience. Bonaventure, one of the major proponents of the theory of illumination, divided the light of Augustine into three lights: exterior, interior and superior. Through meditation on the visible world (exterior light) and internally known concepts (interior light), one could progress to the recognition and knowledge of God (superior light), the source of intellectual light. However, later in the Middle Ages the theory of illumination as a general epistemological theory explaining all cognition was replaced in the rising Thomism, Scotism and Nominalism with different epistemological schemes. In this process the theory developed into a distinction among three lights (light of nature, light of faith or grace, light of glory), to each of which were attributed different epistemological qualities. For the Thomists and the proponents of the *via moderna*, only the light of glory could attain the immediate knowledge of God. The other lights came to acquire ontological independence from the divine light, becoming its created natural and supernatural similitudes. The natural light thus began to signify the capacity of abstraction inherent to the intellect. The light of faith acquired the role in which it referred to grace that inclined the will to trust in revealed propositions, the truth of which it did not yet see, so that it acted in a mediating position between the mind and God. The proponents of the *via moderna* denied in general, that in this life God could become the object of immediate

intuitive cognition. However, the concept of immediate illumination survived (at least partially) in mystical writings such as the works of Jean Gerson, which evince Bonaventure's idea that certain concepts are impressed on the mind directly by divine illumination.

One of the central biblical passages associated with the doctrine of divine illumination is Ps. 4:7, which speaks about the light of the face of God. To determine Luther's relation to the doctrine of divine illumination we examined the interpretation of Psalm 4:7 by Augustine, Bonaventure, Gerson, Thomas Aquinas, Nicholas of Lyra and Luther. Augustine associates text with the knowledge of eternal principles, especially regarding the question of how true good can be known. For Augustine, the answer is that the divine internal eternal light shows the true good. By turning towards that light, the mind participates in God (the true good) and in the eternal principles it knows by that light. Bonaventure builds upon Augustine by distinguishing among the three lights that the soul can progressively recognize through turning from exterior things to interior, and then superior, things. This process serves as the basis for the meditation on and contemplation of God in the *Itinerarium*. Gerson interprets Psalm 4:7 in compliance with Bonaventure, as speaking of both the natural knowledge of God as well as the intuition of God by the gracious light of faith. He attributes the knowledge of the face of God especially to the light of faith. For Bonaventure and Gerson, the lights are not separated temporally but in degree and by the orientation of the person, so that one ascends from the lower light to the higher through meditation. The natural light already confers upon the soul an immediate knowledge of God as being and good, although without meditation the soul does not recognize the fact that God is the source of these foundational principles. Thomas Aquinas, on the other hand, draws a stricter separation among the lights of nature, faith and glory. For him, the light of nature does not allow access to the divine ideas. It is only a natural capacity of the intellect which abstracts concepts from sense material, a created similitude of the eternal light. Nevertheless, as an imprint of the eternal law, it also allows the human being to discern between good and evil. For Thomas neither does the light of faith allow the cognition of God or the eternal types. Its function is to dispose the soul towards the heavenly glory by discerning dogmas that are to be believed and by allowing the soul to receive prophetic images which serve a mediating function between the soul and God. Unlike in the system of Bonaventure and Gerson, for Thomas there exists an insurmountable gap between the two lower lights and the light of glory. This gap can be transcended only in the heavenly vision by the light of glory. Thomas's idea is developed further in the *via moderna*. For example, Nicholas of Lyra, the biblical commentator used by Luther, interprets the Psalm as speaking of the first principles of the speculative and practical sciences, which are known by means of themselves (*per se nota*) by all. Therefore according to Lyra by natural reason the human being can sufficiently know the works of righteousness. From one side the ontological relationship between God and the human mind established by illumination is eliminated, but on the other side the human being becomes capable of knowing the principles sufficient for righteousness by natural reason. These ontological and epistemological presuppositions form the basis for the *via moderna*'s radically Pelagian understanding of *facere quod in se est*.

Luther associates his interpretation of Ps 4:7 explicitly to that of Augustine, but in understanding the light of the Psalm as the light of faith he also uses the medieval

distinction among the three lights. This can also be seen in his utilisation of the image of the Tabernacle, which is used as well by Bonaventure and Gerson. In Luther's interpretation, the Psalmist asks who will show what is the true good, and by asking the question he demonstrates that he does not know. Based on this premise, Luther rejects Thomist and Nominalist interpretations, according to which the Psalm speaks about the light of natural reason known to all. Faith is required for knowing the true good, i.e., God, who hides under opposites. The light of faith constitutes a new spiritual intellect in the human being, an intellect which can discern the presence of God under seemingly evil things. The light of even faith shows in incipient manner the very face and vision of God (*visio dei*), so that in a sense by faith the believer already possesses the future good things. Luther stresses the real presence of God in the heart by the light of faith, and defines faith as an infused theological virtue that is ontologically divine. As the object of faith, God is the real, self-diffusing good which gives joy to the will and directs the believer in the midst of external sorrows. However, this knowledge is hidden from carnal people, who lack the light of faith. Faith is thus the removal of the first veil of the Tabernacle, through which one enters into the cognition and possession of spiritual things. However, the second veil, which distinguishes the vision of faith from the eschatological vision, remains in place. This means that there are still things which are concealed from faith, and in this sense faith can be considered a sign of future goods. Thus Luther's interpretation is clearly connected to the medieval tradition, where Luther joins especially Augustine, Bonaventure and Gerson against the Thomists and Nominalists. The point at which he departs from the tradition lies in his interpretation of the light of the Psalm exclusively as the light of faith, as well as his emphasis on the sharp conflict between it and the light of reason. In general, however, the essence and function of the light on Luther follows the Augustinian doctrine of illumination.

The functions of the light of faith in Luther's thought can be distinguished from each other by their relation to the concepts of knowledge and good (and the respective capacities of intellect and affect), and by their relation to the God and the creation. The light of faith functions in relation to God as 1) as an incomprehensible light making the presence of God known (intellectual aspect or the aspect of knowledge); and 2) as a captivating light making the goodness of God experienced (affective aspect or the aspect of goodness). In relation to the creation, the light of faith functions as 3) the light of the intellect which gives understanding and shows the true content of things (intellectual aspect); and 4) as the light which directs and guides the affect of Christians and makes them able to internally obey the law of God and do good joyfully (affective aspect). Moreover, faith as the theological intellect has both a passive role with regard to its receiving the divine light, and an active role, regarding to which it understands things with the help of that light.

Regarding this the passive role in relation to God, Luther defines faith as the knowledge of the face of God (i.e., actual and direct knowledge) in which the mind, comprising both the intellect and affect, is illuminated by the divine light. Luther thus rejects the idea of the *via moderna* which limited the direct knowledge of God to the state of the blessed. For Luther, faith follows the Platonic principle according to which only like is able to know like. By the light of faith impressed on the soul, the soul receives the form of Christ the Word, becoming one spirit with God and thus able to know him. Luther

explains this relation between God and the soul with various Aristotelian, Platonic and mystical metaphors emphasizing the receptive passivity of the believer in this union. The passivity is also related to the suffering of the flesh, when in faith the person crosses over from the knowledge of visible carnal things to the knowledge of God and invisible things. Although direct and immediate, this knowledge is still imperfect and partial. Luther's understanding of the way God is grasped in faith seems to follow the Bonaventurian concept of *cognitio per modum excessus*: ecstatic knowledge. Characteristic of this type of cognition is the soul being taken captive by an object which it does not comprehend, because the object exceeds the capacity of the soul. The infinite goodness of the object (i.e., God) nevertheless captures the intellect and the will to follow it. The soul experiences the presence, help and goodness of God, but cannot define the experience. Luther uses various images from the Victorine and Bonaventurian tradition of mysticism to describe the incomprehensible nature of the object of faith. One of these is the wings of the Cherubim (which represent the reconciliation of mutual opposites in God) upon which Christ "flies" in the soul over faith, casting his shadow on the heart. Luther also commonly describes faith in terms of elevation and rapture, reflecting the central features of Bonaventure's idea.

Luther also describes the cognition of God in faith in relation to the affect. Faith shows God as the true good and source of all good, creating joy and delight in the heart. The light of faith shows God as the self-diffusing highest good, and the other good things in the light of this good. Spiritual goods flow from God and are sustained by him. Participation in these spiritual goods enlarges the heart such, that faith becomes the fountain and principle of all good works and virtues in the believer. Nevertheless, the joy and blessedness acquired by faith is still partial and shadowy, as is the knowledge of God. It will be perfected in the future heavenly vision.

Thus for Luther faith is immediate and direct, actual and experiential knowledge of God. In faith God is known "face-to-face", with the highest part of the mind receptive to the divine light. Through the light of faith the believer is united with the divine nature. This ontological union is the foundation of the epistemological knowledge of God. Luther thus in his concept of faith agrees with the doctrine of divine illumination. One can also distinguish three different approaches in Luther's texts, which can be termed Augustinian (emphasis on the divine light), Aristotelian (emphasis on the concept of form and passive receptivity) and Mystical (emphasis on shadow, enigma, ecstasis, image of the Cherubim). These three different approaches are, however, fused together to reflect the same central ideas: faith is divine activity and human receptivity. In faith God is known directly, immediately and experientially, but this knowledge is still partial and exceeds human comprehension. In general, Luther's concept appears to be related especially to the doctrine of illumination in the form in which it exists in the theology of Bonaventure and Gerson.

In relation to the universe, faith has an active function as the theological intellect. This concept has an extensive basis in Luther's texts. Before the Fall, human beings possessed this true intellect but it was lost in the Fall: the natural intellect became fixed on the sensible. Faith restores the theological intellect, allowing the human being to grasp invisible and spiritual things. However, the objects of the intellect are not spiritual things



separate from the visible. The intellect functions as a light which is able to see the invisible things which are present in visible things, or to which the visible things point to.

The first question related to this function is Luther's understanding of the nature of the intellect and of the relationship it has to its object. Unlike sometimes claimed, it does not seem possible that the object of the intellect is simply revealed propositional knowledge. If such were the case, the same natural intellect could be considered as theological when it merely thinks of theological objects. Luther indeed states that the intellect is not a power of the soul (*potentia*), but an act or actuality (*actus*). However, by this he refers to the fact that the intellect is created by external divine illumination, and without actual illumination it does not exist. It is born in the union with Christ, the eternal Word, by which the human being becomes a spiritual man. Luther speaks of this union in terms of instruction (*eruditio*), which includes being drawn away from sensual things, and being united with Christ. As the eternal, internal Word Christ grants the believer the access to the spiritual world. Thus as the Word he himself is the understanding both with regard to the capacity (i.e., intellect) as well as with regard to the object (i.e., invisible spiritual things grasped by it). As Luther states, both the subject and the object of faith are divine, the subject as participating in Christ, the object as being the spiritual things which are the true *signatum* of the external things. That *signatum* is ultimately Christ himself, as we saw in our analysis of Luther's understanding of reality. Luther thus describes the process of *eruditio*, with regard to the subject, as the removal of the impediment (i.e., blindness of the original sin), by the divine light, which purifies the intellect in order that the believers can see God in all things. With regard to the objects, their external sensual covering is 'removed' so that their internal invisible content is grasped. Luther uses the image of the Tabernacle to illustrate this process. By faith the person enters through the first veil into the Sanctuary, becoming the internal man and seeing God face-to-face by the light of faith. This vision especially signifies the revelation of the divinity of Christ. It is necessarily connected to Christ as man and God, but not limited only to understanding his divinity under his humanity. Rather, Christ functions as the entrance to understanding the entire spiritual world.

The connection of the light of faith to the concrete humanity of Christ as its point of departure is even one of the factors separating the light of faith from the light of glory. However, considered in abstraction from its connection to the human nature of Christ, the nature of the light is very Augustinian. It is the light of truth and the light of the intellect which makes the person capable of and receptive to spiritual things and able to understand the invisible. Moreover, the intellect of faith does not function by abstracting the intellectual reasons (*rationes*) from sensible things, but rather those reasons come directly from the light of faith. The connection between the sensible things that are understood, and the end result of understanding, is guaranteed not by the process of abstraction (as in Thomism). It is guaranteed by the ontological link between the final ends or the true content of things (*rationes*), and the intellectual light showing those ends. That link is Christ as the eternal Word, in whom those ends exist as the reality signified by all things, and who as the eternal Word is also the light of faith illumining the intellect and showing those ends. Luther's theory of the nature of the theological intellect therefore follows the logic of Augustine and Bonaventure's doctrine of illumination. By the light of faith, the

theological intellect understands all things, although theological objects such as Christ the Incarnate, the Scripture and the Church lie on the foreground.

Luther's definition of faith as the light of the face of God includes both the intellect and affect. However, there has been some discussion about whether faith is related primarily to the intellect or to the affect. It indeed seems that in the infusion of faith the affect is concerned first, but when faith has been born it becomes a guiding light for both. To the intellect it shows the truth; to the affect, the true good. The function of the light with regard to the affect is thus based on the idea that it shows God as the true good, both in an indistinct sense (highest good) and in a distinct sense (the source and criterion of all good things). With regard to the universe, this experience of true good in faith withdraws the affect from the multiplicity of external objects of desire, and directs it to the right way. It also enlightens the evils of the flesh, the moral content of the Scriptures and the Passion of Christ. In this sense, faith is connected to regulative moral principles. Faith, however, also leads the Christian by fixing his heart on the future goods incipiently possessed through it. It becomes in the Christian a new spiritual will which produces good movements and virtues. Even as Luther emphasizes the passivity of the believer in the birth of faith, in its essence faith itself is dynamic and active, because it connects the Christian to the self-diffusing good that God is. In this sense, faith also functions as a motivating principle. The infused internal virtue of the heart comes to be incarnated in concrete external deeds, such that the Christian can be said to co-operate with faith. However, these works are always dependent on the existence of faith. Luther's emphasis on the dynamic nature of faith can be seen as problematic in the sense that it usually does not give answers to concrete moral dilemmas. Luther's interest is in the quality of the will, reflected in the ontological difference between the letter and the spirit, law and grace. The two functions of faith as criterion (regulative principle) and as direction (motivating principle) also seem to be related to God as the first cause and the final cause. As the first cause, he is the source and fountain of good; as final cause, he is the reality towards which the believer progresses. These two aspects are united in God, as in Christ he is the principle of creation, its center and its end. The same ontological framework can be distinguished behind Luther's understanding of faith both with regard to the intellect and the affect. He is the Word and Wisdom in which all things are constituted, and the consummation of which they reflect. Thus Luther's Platonic, or Augustinian, understanding of reality also forms the precondition for the functions of faith.

However, although for Luther faith in itself is an intellectual light having God as its direct object, Luther also speaks of faith as a kind of intermediate stage between the earthly, carnal vision of things and the bright vision of God in Heaven. Compared to the light of glory, the light of faith is still in some sense enigmatic, even darkness. The knowledge of God acquired in faith is still shadowy, partial and hidden. One can even find in Luther's writings statements speaking of faith as a sign and not yet a reality. This issue is related to the wider question of how the light of faith and the light of glory differ from each other. Luther's understanding of the issue seems to provide an unique answer to this question.

First of all, when Luther speaks about faith as a sign and not yet a reality, he understands faith as a theological sign of the Church which participates in the reality it signifies, but in a hidden manner. This hiddenness is constituted by the different

perspectives of the carnal, earthly vision and the glorious heavenly vision. The relation of the Church to these two visions is illustrated by the middle chamber of the Tabernacle which is hidden from the forecourt. From the carnal perspective, the content of faith is absent (i.e., from the senses) but from the spiritual perspective, the content is present. Moreover, although faith immediately possesses its object in the spirit, it possesses it only partially and incipiently. It is not yet the heavenly vision. Faith is the beginning of a process which will be perfected in the heavenly glory. This partialness is the first aspect in which faith differs from the beatific vision.

The second aspect in which faith differs from the heavenly vision is the presence of the humanity of Christ in faith. Faith and the Church are connected to the human nature of Christ and to the general principle of God's hiddenness under material or human form both in Christ as well as in sacramental reality. Christ, Scripture, the Sacraments and the Christians, which are all related to the principle of Incarnation as hiding their proper content under a material form, form the 'doors' of the Church that are signified by the first veil of the Tabernacle. The humanity of Christ is thus the starting point, from where the Christian enters into growing participation in divine things. However, the humanity of Christ stays commixed with his divinity in faith until the point the Christian enters heavenly life in death. Luther emphasizes this point by speaking about the Church as the reign of grace, in which Christ reigns as human, in contrast to the reign of glory where he reigns as God. This reign means that Christ rules in the Church mortifying the flesh of the Christians by his humanity, while he by his divinity simultaneously draws Christians into participation in the eternal goods, bringing the spirit to life. The process of transition (*transitus*) through the middle chamber of the Tabernacle from earthly life into heavenly life is constituted by these two points. In the course of this process, the spiritual light, knowledge and joy the Christian receives grows. The theological basis for this process and for distinguishing between the light of faith and the light of glory appears to be Luther's peculiar understanding of the spiritual humanity of the resurrected Christ. The starting point of faith is related to Christ's concrete humanity and the sacraments, but in faith Christ becomes present spiritually in the heart of believers. This presence not only takes place by his divinity but also by his humanity, which is not spatially constricted. This union of the human and divine natures in Christ, who even in faith is also present in his humanity, dims the brilliance of the divine light in faith, distinguishing it from the light of glory. Luther's idea appears to imply an ontological hierarchy of lights akin to that of Bonaventure. Christ's spiritual presence in faith in his humanity (and not only in his divinity) seems to answer (at least partially) the accusations of Osianderian heresy which have been leveled against the Finnish School's interpretation of Luther.

The third aspect in which faith differs from the heavenly vision is that it is hidden from the old, carnal nature of the believer. For the spirit, faith is a divine light although one that is made more dim by the humanity of Christ, but for the flesh, it is mere darkness. On the one hand, this hiddenness causes suffering for the flesh; the flesh does not understand where the person is being drawn and led by the light of faith. On the other hand, however, this covering also protects the flesh from the divine justice and splendor, a splendor and justice it cannot withstand. The inability of the flesh to perceive the spiritual light is partially caused by the objects of faith, which are invisible. Therefore, the reason and the senses (which have visible things as their objects) cannot reach to it. However, there is an

actual conflict as well between the light of faith and the light of nature, due to their being connected to their respective affects and notions of good, which are at conflict with each other. Thus Luther can state that the light of nature and the light of faith are related to each other as darkness is to light. The light of nature must diminish when the light of faith grows. Behind this duality one can see again an ontological hierarchy among the lights. The spirit receives the light of faith directly from Christ, in like manner to the luminous part of the Moon from the Sun. However, the other part (i.e., flesh and the lower portion of the soul) remains dark and obscure, not directly illumined. From this conflict between the flesh and the spirit the situation results that in his writings Luther can describe the experiences of the Christian using expressions that seem contrary to each other, yet which take place simultaneously. The Christian perceives faith at the same time as light and darkness, both feeling the resistance of the flesh and the comfort of the spirit. Both take place simultaneously within the same person, which is explained by Luther's application of the concept of *communicatio idiomatum* to the Christian person. Thus faith also follows Luther's general idea of God being present under opposites.

Therefore we can see that in its general form Luther's concept of faith follows the theory of divine illumination. The reservations we have made concerning faith as the middle stage limit and define the light of faith with regard to the vision of God in the light of glory. However, ontological structure behind these reservations follows the idea of the hierarchy of lights and displays similarities to the thought of Bonaventure and Gerson. In light of our findings, we can see that Luther defines faith as an immediate cognition of a present object, even though this cognition is in part shadowy and enigmatic. Therefore, for Luther faith is not primarily propositional, but knowledge of acquaintance. This view is confirmed by Luther's *Disputation on Acquired and Infused Faith* (1520). In this disputation Luther describes the difference between faith as an infused virtue, and faith as acquired opinions or grammatical understanding of the external word. According to Luther the latter, acquired faith amounts to nothing without infused faith. Infused faith, on the other hand, is capable of teaching the Christian internally, as it dynamically sprouts forth correct opinions concerning God. Nevertheless, there is one instance in which faith as trust in the unknown plays a very significant role in Luther's thought. This involves the tribulations and afflictions at the beginning and growth of faith. Especially in the tribulation connected to the first infusion, the content of faith is perceived as darkness by the intellect, because the natural capacities do not perceive the spiritual reality. In this infusion, the person is thus led to rely on a reality which he or she does not yet comprehend. In this process the person must be way consoled in some way by the external word and the Holy Spirit in order to suffer the work of God in patience. The same is true to a lesser extent of consequent infusions of grace. Growth in grace takes place through a similar process in which the Christian does not at first understand what is happening, but must trust and rely on the will of God over against what is experienced. The reasons for such tribulation can only be understood afterwards, so that the experience increases trust in God. The intellectual aspect of faith is thus excluded in these tribulations, and the emphasis falls on the will of the person. In this sense, these tribulations constitute an exception to Luther's general understanding of faith. One can ask, whether there is a tension in Luther's understanding of faith between the intellectualist Augustinian-Bonaventurean model, and the model emphasizing the function of the will in the

tribulations, a view usually associated with Tauler, Gerson and Nominalist mysticism. Further, one can ask whether the latter model is able to guarantee the human passivity usually so important for Luther in the process of justification. However, if one approaches these tribulations by attributing the Christian's patience to the consolation of the Holy Spirit, there need be no conflict between these two models. One can rather view the Trinitarian economy as working in these tribulations, because the Holy Spirit brings human beings to Christ through them. Moreover, such tribulations can even be understood in terms of an ontological hierarchy. The light of faith can be said to shine from the superior darknesses formed by the divine incomprehensibility. When a person grows in faith, this process can be understood as coming to a greater participation in the divine light. The knowledge that is assumed in this process is always 'darkness' first, and becomes 'light' only when it is understood. The Christian thus progresses from faith to faith and from clarity to clarity, with increasing participation in the divine light. Moreover, through this process according to Luther the Christian becomes more capable of teaching others. Although the proper content of faith is spiritual, nevertheless it is therefore possible to convey it by means of words. However, the content of the teaching is not understood until it is experienced personally. The teacher can, however, give advice on enduring the tribulations in which God internally teaches the content of the word. One can therefore conclude that for Luther the true content of faith is Christ, the eternal Word. This internal reality cannot be adequately described with external words alone, but requires personal experience to be understood. Nevertheless, God works in the creation of faith with the help of external proclamation, which functions as the vehicle of Christ in infusion of faith. Moreover, although a Christian by their own means cannot create faith in other people, it is possible to teach and assist them in enduring the tribulations the word of God (as the effective word) creates in the infusion of faith.

As a general conclusion to this work, we can see that Luther's theology of faith in his biblical lectures between 1513 and 1521 can best be understood against the background formed by the illuminationist theology of the Augustinian School of thought of the Middle Ages. Besides Augustine himself, the primary proponents of this tradition were (among others) the Victorine theologians and Bonaventure. The central ideas of this school were also mediated to Luther through the works of Jean Gerson. Luther is expressly known to have read the writings of both Bonaventure and Gerson, and he explicitly quotes Gerson in his definition of faith. Especially important with regard to the definition of faith as direct and actual knowledge of God face-to-face is the Augustinian understanding of the doctrine of illumination, with which Luther explicitly associates himself in his definition of faith as a divine light. Luther's association with this tradition explains why he views the Thomist and Nominalist concepts of faith as inadequate. Both these traditions exclude the possibility of immediate or intuitive knowledge of God in this life so that the content of faith becomes trust in propositions revealed by doctrinal authority, and their anthropological emphasis shifts to the will of the human being, which grace disposes to believe in the revealed content. In this sense, the Thomist and Scholastic definition of faith can be viewed merely as an empty silhouette given life and colour by love infused by grace. But for Luther, who joins in the Platonic understanding of Augustine, Gerson and Bonaventure, faith itself is a dynamic reality, direct and actual contact with the divine, which illumines both the intellect and the affect. It teaches the Christian internally as well

as creates in him a new will which joined to the self-giving nature of God participated in through the light of faith, constantly brings forth correct opinions and good works. Thus it is not only the understanding of faith as immediate illumination which Luther adopts from the tradition. The Platonic concept of the good as a self-diffusing first cause also plays a very important role in Luther's understanding of reality. More in the background is the metaphysics of light, which Luther does not explicitly discuss at length, most probably because of his general reservations towards metaphysical speculation. Nevertheless, these form the necessary background for the ontological hierarchy reflected in Luther's tripartite anthropology, in the related conception of the three lights, and in the cosmology consisting of the three 'stages' of the works of God in the world. They are reflected in the image of the Tabernacle, used by Luther both as an image of the universe and of the human being. In light of this ontological hierarchy, spiritual and divine things are more real (and thus more properly "light") than the created things, especially those which are visible and corporeal. However, in its natural state the fallen intellect, turned away from the divine light and blinded by sin, perceives those higher lights as darkness. The light of faith must come from outside, as an external infusion granting the spirit the capacity of perceiving superior spiritual reality. Even then, however, the lower capacities remain in their darkness. Moreover, Luther seems also to understand the corporality itself as a kind of shadow obscuring the divine light. This understanding can be seen in the relation of the light of faith and the Church to the light of glory and the heavenly vision. Even as the light of faith liberates the Christian from the impediment formed by sin and by the theological intellect perceives the spiritual objects present in the theological signs of the Church, at the same time the stage of the Church is distinguished from the heavenly glory by corporeality: both of the Christian himself existing in his perishable animal body which still lives an animal life, and of Christ himself, ruling the Church through his humanity. This pertains not only to the external sacraments but to the light of faith itself, which is made more dim and more obscure by the humanity of Christ, and is spiritually commixed with it. These two: the sin of the evil flesh and the corporality of the human nature constitute (besides the partialness of ecstatic cognition of faith) the factors which distinguish the vision of faith from the heavenly vision.

Therefore, Luther's early theology can be therefore seen as a continuation of the theology of the medieval Augustinian School with regard to the concept of the light of faith and with regard to his understanding of reality. His views seem especially connected to those of Bonaventure and Gerson. This type of theology views the historical acts of God within a Platonic understanding of reality from which these acts derive their nature as mere signs, sacramental signs, or heavenly reality. However, one should note the central point which Luther emphasizes, and which characterizes both his anthropology and his concept of faith. For Luther, there is no natural or created grounds for a human being to ascend to the divine and invisible world, but these grounds are given in faith *ab extra*, outside the human being's own capacities. Thus in a sense it can be said that Luther also breaks the continuity between the three lights, but that whereas the Thomists and the proponents of the *via moderna* situate the break between the light of faith and the light of glory, Luther situates it at the chasm between the light of nature and the light of faith. Without grace, there is no natural ascent to the cognition of God from the light of nature. Therefore the fundamental principles of justification for Luther: *sola fide, sola gratia*,

*solus Christus*, can also be observed with regard to the cognition of God. Such cognition is possible only by faith or grace given in Christ. But at the same time Luther understands the nature of the light of faith within the context offered by the theology of the Augustinian School, especially Gerson and Bonaventure.

In addition to these general conclusions regarding Luther's thought there are also some things to be paid attention to concerning the state of the research in general. During the course of my research it became apparent that only a scant amount of research exists on the concepts of light of faith and divine illumination after Bonaventure. Even with regard to Bonaventure, most of the serious scholarly work examines the theory of illumination only as a general epistemology, and is not concerned with the relevance of this theory to the knowledge of God. One can find even less material concerning the period after illumination was discarded by the Thomists and the *via moderna* as a general epistemological theory. This is because the philosophers writing the compedia of the history of ideas have not usually been interested in topics that are relevant only to theology. Most studies that do examine the concept of the light of faith after Bonaventure focus on the meaning of the concept in the works of Thomas Aquinas, without referring to the wider context of the theory. On the relation of Gerson to the doctrine of illumination, one can find totally conflicting statements. My research shows that a serious study should be made of the concept of the light of faith (or the three lights together) that would examine the role of the theory of illumination as a theological epistemology in the late Middle Ages, as none seems to be available. In my opinion, the lack of such research is one reason explaining why Luther's concept of faith up until now has not been understood within its proper context.

Another topic for subsequent research should be the examination of how the concepts of the light of faith and the intellect of faith are further developed in Luther's later works. Already in the course of this study we noted the shift from a simple to a double hiddenness (i.e., hiddenness under contraries) and as well the development in which especially theological objects such as Christ, sacraments and Scripture become the objects of the intellect of faith. We also noted that within the scope of the sources of this study the so-called *pro me* aspect of faith, as well as faith as beliefs, does not have much significance. However, it seems plausible that this situation changes (at least to some extent) in the later works of Luther. In this regard it would be interesting to observe how Luther relates these ideas to the concept of illumination. On the other hand, as demonstrated by the earlier Finnish research, some central ideas such the use of image of the Tabernacle or the Temple in illustrating the nature of the presence of Christ in faith, continue in the mature works of Luther such as the second *Commentary on Galatians*. More research is necessary in order to track the changes and developments that take place with regard to the concept of faith in Luther's thought.

Finally, the introduction stated that Luther's theology of the Cross was left on purpose without systematic examination in order to limit the present study to manageable proportions. On the other hand, however, we have seen how Luther connects the concepts of the Cross and *transitus* to the crossing-over from the visible to the invisible which takes place through faith, and which causes suffering for the flesh. The concept of the tribulations is directly linked to this process of crossing-over, as are many of the mystical expressions Luther employs. The examination of Luther's understanding of reality and

faith is therefore directly connected with how the theology of the Cross is understood. Therefore, one avenue for continuing the investigation of Luther's theology presented in this study would be to take it as the basis for conducting a similar analysis of Luther's understanding of the theology of the Cross.

When it comes to the wider significance of the findings of this study, its results bring about ecumenical possibilities as well as challenges. As we have seen, with regard to the point of contention raised by Pope Benedict XVI, the situation is actually the other way around. As has already been noted by other researchers such as Eero Huovinen in his *Fides infantium* (1997), in Luther's theology the concept of faith is actually more immediate and bears more efficacy than the Catholic notion of *habitus*, which posits a third element of created grace between the soul and God. In Luther's understanding, the soul knows God by faith in a more immediate and direct sense than is possible to convey using the Aristotelian philosophy underlying Thomist theology. What kinds of ecumenical possibilities might this insight offer? At least the traditional claim made by some Catholic theologians, that grace and faith are not effective in the Lutheran view, appears to have been demonstrated to be false. The core point of this issue was solved in the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, but the findings of this study illustrate how the notion of faith and the presence of Christ in Luther's theology should be understood. They up open avenues for comprehending the nature of Luther's theology within the Late Medieval context and demonstrate why the concept of faith has such central significance for Luther's theology in comparison to that of the Thomists and the proponents of the *via moderna*. The divine nature of the light of faith itself explains why for Luther no further infused grace is required in the process of justification in addition to faith itself. Faith itself is already a divine virtue which grasps God, thus it cannot be complemented by adding something to it. As a such divine virtue faith itself is also already dynamic and active, and in this sense it is sufficient for bringing about the renewal which in Catholic theology is attained only by complementing faith with charity.

Another question concerns the possible uses of the findings of this study in the life of the Church. This study shows that Luther's theology cannot be considered an antithesis of all things mystical and ontological, properties attributed in some of the older studies to Catholicism, in contrast to Lutheranism. Luther's theology should rather be understood as a continuation of specific lines of thought in medieval and late medieval mysticism. Luther mentions Jean Gerson and Johannes Tauler by name, but Bonaventure and the Victorine School also seem to have had a major influence on his early thought. Probably one should endeavor to read Luther in the context of his possible sources also in the context of the Lutheran Church in the attempt to understand the nature of Luther's theology better. The findings of this study could thus open up possibilities for spiritual ecumenism, as well as serve the movements within the Lutheran Churches attempting to build a deeper, authentic Lutheran spirituality in continuity with the ancient practices and teachers of the Church.

Finally, specific theological and philosophical considerations also arise from Luther's epistemology of faith. First of all, Luther associates himself with the mystical tradition in general by his understanding of the relation between faith and its object as immediate and non-propositional (i.e., knowledge by acquaintance). From this understanding results that the knowledge which faith has of its object is in the first case *private*. As we have seen,



Luther holds that the content of faith cannot be mediated merely by the grammatical signification of words, but that the ontological element must accompany the words. External words are only understood properly when they are accompanied by the illumination given by the internal Word, Christ, who is the source of the theological intellect. Therefore faith is also *communal*, but it is communal only for the community which by faith participates in Christ. The Church in the proper sense thus becomes (following the Apology of the Augsburg Confession VII and VIII) the community of those who have faith, and proper theology can be accordingly understood as *theologia regenitorum* (i.e., theology of the regenerate). Therefore, Luther's concept as it exists in the sources examined in this study fits well with Pietism. This idea can be considered problematic, however, if one wants theology to play a significant role in the public sphere. As the truth of theological propositions would be apparent only to those who have true faith, it would be difficult to rely to them in a public argument. Moreover, this idea causes problems for doctrinal dialogue. If Christians have differing views concerning God, and the decisive criteria of truth are private (i.e., seen only in faith), it would seem that it is impossible to demonstrate who is right and who is wrong in a theological argument. Luther's criterion for this situation would be to test whether the faith is genuine by means of tribulation. However, because Luther emphasizes the infusion of faith at baptism, his focus does not seem to lie on the individual believer, but rather on the sacramental nature of the Church as a sign and effective instrument of the Kingdom of God in the world, the Church the faithful already participate in in the New Creation. In this sense, it is not only the individual experience of the Christian which forms the basis for theological argumentation, but rather it is Baptism and connection to the sacramental life of the Church which gives the Christian the right to have his voice in the life of the Church. The same idea (that understanding the nature of Christian doctrine requires an experience of faith, but it is formed communally) is also expressed in the Catholic concept of the *sensus fidelium* (i.e., the sense of faith or of the faithful), which functions as a criterion for the teaching of the Church. Nevertheless, it seems that the idea of the internal illumination of faith needs to be complemented with an argument related to the external clarity of the Scripture (as Luther does later, e.g., in his 1525 *On the bondage of the will*) to make it possible to use theological arguments in public debate. This question, however, extends too far beyond the scope of this study. Finally, the anthropological structures of Luther's thought raise the question of the unity of the person. What is the 'person' (*persona*) which unites the contradictory experiences of the old and new man, he flesh and the spirit? The question of how opposing affects can exist in one person (i.e., with regard to the weakness of the will or at the moment of temptation) of course has been discussed extensively. However, Luther's answers seem to hover somewhere between the medieval model of parts of the soul and a modern model of person as the focus of experience. Nevertheless, Luther's concept is ingenious in that despite the discontinuity between the old and the new man, the identity of the person during the transformative work of God is guaranteed by the Christological model of two natures, in which the old man gradually dies away while the new spiritual man is simultaneously led towards the participation of heavenly life, the person being constituted of both these two.

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